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Over 7,000 heatstrokes, 14 deaths in India this yr: RTI

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6 of top-10 firms lose Rs 2.2L cr in market

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SPORTS

Ravindra Jadeja and Washington Sundar carry on a good fight as India takes lead

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PHOTO: PTI

Raj enters Uddhav's home 13 yrs after Bal's death

MUMBAI, 27 JULY

For the first time in 13 years, Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) chief Raj Thackeray visited Matoshree, the Thackeray family residence, to wish cousin and Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray on his birthday. Raj last entered the home in 2012, during Balasaheb Thackeray's funeral. Accompanied by MNS leaders Bala Nandgaonkar and Nitin Sardesai, Raj presented a bouquet of red roses to Uddhav. The two cousins posed for a photograph with Balasaheb's portrait in the background. However, Raj was not seen in a video of the family birthday celebration. The visit comes amid shifting political equations in Maharashtra. On 5 July, the estranged cousins shared a political stage after nearly two decades at a rally focused on Marathi identity and opposition to Hindi imposition. Uddhav hinted they may contest the civic polls together. Raj remarked that Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis achieved what Balasaheb couldn't—bringing them back together. —*PTI*

Karisma seeks share in Sunjay's Rs 30K crore estate

MUMBAI, 27 JULY

In the wake of businessman Sunjay Kapur's sudden death on 12 June, a high-stakes property dispute has emerged involving his Rs 30,000 crore estate. Actor Karisma Kapoor, Sunjay's ex-wife, is reportedly seeking a share in his assets. Sunjay's mother, Rani Kapur, has claimed she holds the majority stake in the Sona Group and is the rightful heir to the business empire. She alleged that attempts are being made by unnamed individuals to seize control of the family legacy. Rani also stated she has not authorised anyone to represent the group. Agencies —*Agencies*

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ED concludes raids at Anil Ambani's firms after 4 days

NEW DELHI, 27 JULY

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has concluded searches at Anil Ambani-owned Reliance Infrastructure (RInfra) and Reliance Power (RPower) in Rs 3,000 crore bank loan fraud and money laundering case. The raids, conducted from 24 to 27 July in Mumbai, targeted multiple locations and resulted in the seizure of documents and computer peripherals. Both companies said the ED's actions have had no impact on business operations or stakeholders, and they continue to cooperate fully. According to ED sources, the probe focuses on loans from Yes Bank to Reliance Group firms between 2017 and 2019. Investigations also cover a Rs 1,050-crore fraud involving RCOM and Canara Bank, and suspected undisclosed foreign assets. RInfra and RPower clarified that Anil Ambani is not on their boards, and any action against RCOM or Reliance Home Finance has no bearing on them. A Rs 10,000-crore loan fund diversion is also under scrutiny. —*PTI*

Stampede at Haridwar's temple kills 6, injures 28

Rumour of electric shock triggered 2025's 7th stampede

HARIDWAR, 27 JULY

A stampede at the Mansa Devi temple in Haridwar on Sunday morning killed at least six devotees and injured 28 others after a rumour of an electric current leak sparked panic among a large crowd gathered at the hilltop shrine. This is the seventh stampeded the nation has seen resulting in 70 deaths all together.

The tragedy occurred around 9am when thousands of devotees, many of them women and children, had assembled at the temple during the ongoing holy month of Sawan. The temple, perched more than 500 feet atop the Shivalik hills, is among Haridwar's five sacred sites and draws massive crowds, particularly on Sundays.

Rumour sparks chaos

According to Haridwar Senior Superintendent of Police Pramendra Singh Dobal, panic broke out following a rumour that electricity was leaking near the staircase route to the temple. District Magistrate Mayur Dikshit confirmed that broken wires were found at the site, and that some people had attempted to ascend using them. Eyewitnesses also reported a spark near an electricity metre, which intensified fears.

Ambulances were rushed to the spot as people lay injured and unattended outside the temple.

A video showed a policeman carrying an injured child, while another clip captured a man in agony inside an ambulance asking about his missing relatives.

In a video, people are seen crushed in a narrow passage that became choked as those descending pushed against others climbing up. The temple is located atop the Shivalik Hills at an elevation of 500ft *PHOTO: SCREENGRAB*

Victims all under 18

Six devotees lost their lives in the incident: Arush, 12; Shakal Dev, 18; Vicky, 18; Vipin, 18; Vakil, and Shanti. Of the 28 injured, five were referred to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Rishikesh. Others were admitted to the district hospital in Haridwar.

Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami visited the injured, ordered a magisterial probe, and announced Rs 2 lakh compensation for the families of the deceased and Rs 50,000 for the injured.

Eyewitness accounts

Many survivors and locals blamed poor crowd management for the tragedy. Devotee Nirmala, recovering in hospital, said the narrow passage became choked as people descending pushed into those climbing up. "People began falling over each other. I lay on the ground and couldn't move," she recalled.

Ajay Jaiswal, a local resident, criticised the administration for failing to anticipate the surge in visitors. "The crowd always swells during Sawan, especially on Sundays. The administration should have been alert," he said.

Mahendra Pratap Singh, an eyewitness watching from a nearby rooftop, said the excessive crowd was the main reason for the incident.

Overcrowding and access routes

The temple can be accessed by road, ropeway, or a narrow stairway that begins near Har Ki Pauri. The stampede occurred on the staircase route, which passes through dense foliage and has a ditch on one side. On Sunday, the path was packed with devotees crawling shoulder to shoulder, unable to move freely.

Locals said the crowd had been building up for hours without intervention. Just days earlier, Haridwar had hosted over 4.5 crore devotees during the Kanwar Yatra, and the city remained crowded. Chunris, footwear, and belongings of devotees lay scattered across the site, marking the chaos of a tragedy that many say was preventable with better planning and crowd control. —*PTI*

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EC's SIR to keep out 94L voters in Bihar: SC told

NEW DELHI, 27 JULY

The Association for Democratic Rights (ADR) has told the Supreme Court that the Election Commission's Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar could disenfranchise nearly 94 lakh eligible voters. The ADR alleges large-scale procedural lapses, including enumeration forms uploaded without voters' consent — even of the deceased.

In its affidavit, ADR cited Bihar's projected adult population of 8.18 crore in July 2025, compared to only 7.24 crore names on the draft rolls. The organisation, represented by advocates Prashant Bhushan and Neha Rathi, claims the SIR lacks defined procedures, giving electoral registration officers (EROs) unchecked discretion.

"Forms are being mass-uploaded to meet unrealistic targets. Voters are reporting submissions without any interaction with booth-level officers," ADR said. It added that a single ERO handling over 3 lakh individuals renders due diligence "humanly impossible".

The EC, in an official statement, revealed that 65 lakh voters will be excluded from the draft rolls, to be published on 1 August. These include 22 lakh deceased individuals, 36 lakh untraceable or permanently relocated, and 7 lakh duplicate registrations.

The first phase of SIR ended on 25 July, with enumeration forms received from 7.24 crore voters — 91.69 per cent of the electorate. .

ADR and civil society groups argue that excluding Aadhaar, ration cards, and voter IDs from accepted citizenship documents could worsen disenfranchisement. —*Agencies*

>>>More on Page 7

The EC, in an official statement, revealed that 65 lakh voters will be excluded from the draft rolls, to be published on 1 August *Photo: ANI*

CAPF troops with disability to remain in service

NEW DELHI, 27 JULY

Officers and jawans of the CAPFs who lose their limbs or suffer any permanent disability during operations will continue to remain in service and get their due promotions and pay apart from a one-time basic monetary package, Home Secretary Govid Mohan said on Sunday.

Mohan made the announcement on the occasion of the Central Reserve Police Force's (CRPF) 87th Raising Day here.

A committee led by CRPF director general Gyanendra Pratap Singh will finalise its recommendations and the modalities for the roll out of the plan. While jawans or officers with such injuries were not removed from service, many suffer due to lack of promotions as they fail to conform to the fitness norms.

Such personnel will be posted in some chosen units of these forces and receive their pay and allowances till their retirement.

The top MHA officer added that such personnel will also be provided a "basic minimum monetary package" and the ministry will get this fund from a current government scheme or from the budget allocated to the respective CAPFs. The Home Ministry will ensure new technology gadgets and equipment to the forces that can penetrate thick jungle foliage and beneath the ground to detect IEDs. Women personnel faced issues related to "basic facilities" while undertaking duty movements. —PTI

Film piracy to attract up to 3 yrs in jail

NEW DELHI, 27 JULY

In a bid to curb digital piracy, the government has amended the Cinematograph Act to include jail term and strict fines of up to five per cent of the production cost for those involved in illegal recording and transmission of films.

The government amended the law two years ago to strengthen the provisions against film piracy.

Jail terms vary from three months imprisonment and Rs three lakh fine to three years imprisonment and fine up to five per cent of the audited gross production cost, Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting L Murugan told the Parliament last week.

He said Section 6AA and 6AB of the Cinematograph Act prohibit unauthorised recording and transmission of films.

The newly added Section 7(1B)(ii) of the Cinematograph Act empowers the government to issue necessary directions to intermediaries for hosting pirated content.

Murugan said the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and the Central Board of Film Certification have been empowered to receive complaints from copyright holders or authorised persons, and issue necessary directions to intermediaries hosting such content.

An inter-ministerial committee has been constituted to strengthen anti-piracy strategies and develop coordinated action plans. —*PTI*

Grandmaster Humpy Koneru faced International Master Divya Deshmukh in the FIDE Women's World Cup final held in Belgium *PHOTO:SCREENGRAB*

Divya, Humpy head to tiebreaker after draw

BATUMI, 27 JULY

International Master Divya Deshmukh held top-seeded Grandmaster and compatriot Koneru Humpy to a steady draw on Sunday, pushing the FIDE Women's World Cup final into a tiebreaker.

After missing chances in the first game, Divya showed greater composure against Humpy's Queen's Pawn opening, facing little difficulty with the black pieces. Humpy gained a slight optical advantage with her pair of bishops, but Divya's well-placed knights neutralised the initiative. As the game transitioned through minor and major piece exchanges, the queen-and-minor-piece endgame offered limited prospects for either side.

Humpy attempted to press with a pawn sacrifice, briefly going a pawn down, but regained it later. Divya, managing some weaknesses, forced a draw by repetition in 34 moves.

The tiebreak will begin with two 15-minute games (10-second increment per move). If needed, it will pro-ceed to two 10-minute games, then two five-minute games with a three-second increment. If still tied, an Armageddon-style blitz with three minutes and a two-second increment will decide the champion.

In the third-place playoff, China's Lei Tingjie and Tan Zhongyi appeared headed for a draw. —PTI

KFD claims third life in Karnataka this year

UTTARA KANNADA, 27 JULY

An 11-year-old boy from Ankola town in Uttara Kannada has become the third victim of Kyasanur Forest Dis-ease (KFD) in Karnataka this year. The boy, identified as Arava, had been battling the tick-borne illness since April and succumbed to the disease on Sunday at Indira Gandhi Hospital in Bengaluru.

Initially treated at a government hospital in Ankola, Arava was later referred to Manipal Hospital, then NIM-HANS, and finally to Indira Gandhi Hospital. Despite being given the best treatment available, his condition deteriorated, and he eventually passed away.

Uttara Kannada District Health Officer Dr Niraj BV told **Salar News** said the boy developed anaemia as a result of the infection and could not recover despite timely intervention and quality medication. "We tried all treatment options, but unfortunately he could not be saved," he added.

KFD, a viral disease spread by infected ticks, is endemic to forested regions of the Western Ghats. It typically surfaces during summer and continues until the onset of the monsoon.

Uttara Kannada Deputy Commissioner Rashmi Priya confirmed that KFD medicine has been supplied to affected districts, including Shivamogga, Kodagu, and Chikkamagaluru. —*Salar News*

SENIOR ROLES HIT

India's largest IT firm TCS to sack over 12,000 employees

NEW DELHI, 27 JULY

India's largest IT services firm, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), is set to lay off about 2 per cent, or 12,261 employees, of its global workforce this year, with the majority of those impacted belonging to middle and senior grades.

As of 30 June, 2025, TCS's workforce stood at 6,13,069.

The move is part of the company's broader strategy to become a "future-ready organisation", focusing on investments in technology, AI deployment, market expansion, and workforce realignment, TCS said in a statement.

"Towards this, a number of The year 2025 has been shaping up to be yet another brutal year for the tech sector, with more than 1,00,000 people already out of jobs globally in the first six months, according to reports.

Tech companies like Intel, Meta, and Google are continuing to trim their workforce to grapple with the shifting priorities in the AI era.

In May 2025, Microsoft laid off over 9,000 of its workers, nearly 4 per cent of its workforce.

Meanwhile, reports say that companies including Intel, Microsoft, Google, Amazon, HP, TikTok, and Meta have contributed to eliminating 76,000 jobs in just six months. —*Agencies*

PHOTO: X

Kalaburagi woman killed with iron rod, 5 arrested

KALABURAGI, 27 JULY

An elderly woman was brutally assaulted and murdered with an iron rod in Pethshirur village under Madbool Police Station limits, in Kalaburagi.

Kalaburagi SP Addoor Srinivasalu said police have arrested five accused, including a minor, and seized gold ornaments and Rs 5,500 in cash. The victim, 78-year-old Smt. Jagadevi, wife of the late Revanasiddappa Lali, was found dead in her home on 10 July. A case was registered based on a complaint filed by Sri Gunderrao of Gundagurti. Those arrested are Tanaji Bandgar, 25, Vijaykumar Karegol, 23, Sanjeev Kumar Karegol, 25, Lakshman Talwar, 24, and a 17-year-old minor. Police formed a special team after suspecting foul play during the spot inspection and cracked the case within days. ***—Salar News***

Minor booked for anti-national posts in KGF

KOLAR, 27 JULY

Kyasamballi police in KGF district have apprehended a 14-year-old boy from Dyarahalli village for allegedly spreading anti-national content on social media. Police said the minor was active on Instagram and WhatsApp, using the platforms to share hate messages and engage in radicalisation. Internal security agencies, who had been monitoring his online activity, detained and questioned him before handing him over to Kyasamballi police. Investigations revealed that the boy, originally from Andhra Pradesh, had recently moved to KGF and was staying with his maternal aunt. He reportedly used two mobile phones and had searched for banned outfits online. Police have booked him under Sections 196 and 197 of the BNS. ***—Salar News***

Dhankar's resignation still a mystery, says Kharge

The Congress Chief dodges question on KPCC Prez change

VIJAYAPURA, 27 JULY

Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge said Jagdeep Dhankhar's sudden resignation from the post of Vice President was still a mystery.

Dhankar has to say what really happened, Kharge said. The matter is between him and Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Noting that Dhankar always took the Government's side, Kharge said he never allowed the Opposition to speak whenever it tried to raise issues on farmers, poor or even foreign policy issues.

Mallikarjun Kharge ***PHOTO: PTI***

"I don't know all those details. He (Dhankar) was always on the government's side. He should say what happened," Kharge said in response to a question whether Dhankar was forced to resign as he spoke in favour of farmers.

Kharge said, "When we raised several issues concerning farmers, poor, international issues or foreign policy, he never used to give us an opportunity (in Rajya Sabha as its Chairman)."

"When we tried to raise issues by giving notices on issues regarding the poor, atrocities against women, dalits and downtrodden, and incidents like Hindu-Muslim clashes, he did not give us an opportunity. It (reason for Dhankar's resignation as Vice President) is between him and Modi. We don't have any information on that," he added.

In a sudden move, Dhankhar on 21 July evening resigned from his post as Vice President, citing medical reasons.

Responding to a question about changing the Karnataka Congress President, Kharge said, "All those things cannot be said now. Will speak later."

There has recently been speculation about a rift within the State Congress unit. *—PTI*

TO PROTEST ON MONDAY

BJP: Cong created fertiliser shortage

BENGALURU, 27 JULY

Accusing the ruling Congress of 'failing' Karnataka, State BJP President BY Vijayendra on Sunday urged the Siddaramaiah-led government to file a criminal case and take strict action against companies that are supplying fake seeds and fertilisers to farmers. He accused the State government of creating an "artificial shortage" of urea because of its "mismanagement".

He also alleged that brokers and traders were holding stocks.

Vijayendra also said that BJP's farmers' wing will hold a State-wide protest on Monday.

"Companies supplying fertilisers and seeds are engaging in the despicable act of sabotaging agricultural activities by providing fake seeds to the enthusiastic farming community that is expecting a good harvest in the backdrop of a promising monsoon this time," Vijayendra said on X.

He added that a police vigilance team should be formed to take strict action against the networks that cheat farmers.

The BJP Chief was responding to reports about fake seeds and fertilisers being supplied to farmers in some parts of the State, as farmers allege a shortage in the supply of urea.

Speaking to press later, he alleged that the State government was artificially creating a shortage, despite the central government having given sufficient quantities of urea to the State. At least 8,70,000 metric tonnes of urea were received by State from the Centre, but only about 5, 30,000 metric tonnes is available in the market. "What about the rest? The fear is that somewhere there is some kind of hand-in-glove. Brokers and traders are keeping the stocks; it has to be released," he said. *—PTI*

LEARNING THROUGH FUN

Director of IISc Prof Govindan Rangarajan inaugurates the Fun Science Gallery as Visvesvaraya Museum marks its Diamond Jubilee in Bengaluru on Sunday ***PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD***

Bommai says Cong can't speak on Mahadayi

GADAG, 27 JULY

Former State chief minister Basavarj Bommai on Sunday condemned Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant's statement on the Mahadayi river project but questioned whether the Congress had any moral right to speak on the issue. He claimed that all progress that has been made on the Mahadayi project happened under the BJP government.

"Congress leader Sonia Gandhi herself during the Goa polls said that not a single drop of Mahadayi water would be given to Karnataka. What moral right does Congress have to speak on this issue?" he asked.

"There is no need to politicise the Mahadayi project issue. We are all united as this is an issue concerning the State," the BJP leader said. "I condemn the statement made by the Chief Minister of Goa. He must act in accordance with the law, and hence I condemn his remarks."

Addressing the Goa Assembly last week, Sawant claimed that the Centre would not approve the Mahadayi project, and that his government would file a contempt petition in the Supreme Court against Karnataka for trying to divert the Mahadayi water.

Bommai accused the Congress party of building a barrier to prevent Mahadayi water from flowing into the Malaprabha river, thereby obstructing the interlinking canal work initiated during the BJP regime and this was the only "contribution" Congress made to the Mahadayi project. *—PTI*

Basavarj Bommai ***PHOTO: PTI***

Surjewala is not 'super CM': HM

DAVANGERE, 27 JULY

Senior Congress leader and Karnataka Home Minister G Parameshwara on Sunday ruled out any interference by AICC general secretary in-charge of the State, Randeep Singh Surjewala, into the State's administration. He rejected the Opposition calling Surjewala a "super CM" as mere allegations far from truth.

He said as the party's General Secretary in-charge of Karnataka, Surjewala's repeated trips to the State is natural, as he has to keep watch on whether the Congress government is implementing promises.

Surjewala has neither called any officials for a meeting, nor has he given any instructions to them, Parameshwara said.

After Surjewala had recently met party MLAs and ministers individually, Opposition BJP and JD(S) took a dig at the Congress, terming him as a "super CM".

Parameshwara said, "They are mere allegations. There is no truth in it. Surjewala is our party general secretary in-charge. He has been appointed by the AICC. There is nothing new in it. He was there before the elections and even now."

"What does the BJP have to do with it? Don't their party general secretaries visit the State and hold meetings with BJP leaders and workers here?" he added. *—PTI*

City community recycles discarded god idols, photos

BENGALURU, 27 JULY

A City community is turning discarded idols and images of gods into a celebration of sustainability and reverence. During an event organised by the HSR Citizen Forum at Siddhi Vinayaka temple in HSR Layout, residents gathered to recycle and give new purpose to broken or unwanted religious images.

The event, held on July 26, involved an Udvasana pooja, a ritual believed to extract the deity's presence from the idol. Participants then separated recyclable materials such as glass, plastic, wood, and paper, while some idols found new homes or were repurposed.

Among those taking part was class nine student Ayushvi Roy, born to atheist parents, collects idols, including Goddess Saraswathi and Lord Ganesha, for her shrine. She has reportedly said that although she is an atheist she is a believer and make a point to go to temple everyday.

The youngest volunteer, a nine-year-old Prashasthi, who dressed as goddess and carefully removed nails from old frames. She expressed her enjoyment in making clay Ganesha idols during festivals. 71-year-old Vanaja shared her motivation to rescue idols, criticising consumerism and the wastefulness of discarded religious images.

Veteran volunteer Ananthakrishnan, aged 68, said he values the purpose these events give him, while software engineer Sunil Reddy highlighted the growing turnout, with participants travelling from nearby towns. The community's efforts reflect a respectful approach to religious artefacts, promoting circularity and sustainability. *—PTI*

'Game of Thrones' actor visits Rameshwaram Cafe

NEW DELHI, 27 JULY

'Game of Thrones' actor Nikolaj Coster-Waldau surprised his Indian fans by appearing at Bengaluru's Rameshwaram cafe.

A video was shared by an Instagram user, who got to meet the actor during his visit. In the video the fan filmed Coster-Waldau and also made him pose for a selfie with her.

"So I was at @theramesh-waramcafe, Bengaluru when I was randomly filming myself and just found @nikolajwilliamcw aka Jaime Lannister from @gameofthrones standing just behind me — it was a star-struck moment," she captioned the post.

Another post was shared by the official page of the cafe on social media. It featured the actor alongside his team.

"A star-studded moment at The Rameshwaram Cafe, Rajajinagar! Today, we had the absolute honour of hosting the incredibly talented Nikolaj William Coster-Waldau and his team. Known worldwide for his stellar performances and charismatic presence, Nikolaj's visit was truly a memorable highlight for us. Thank you for choosing to experience our authentic South Indian flavours. We are beyond thrilled to have shared this special day with you," read the caption of the post. *—PTI*

- A fan filmed Nikolaj Coster-Waldau, writing 'I was at @theramesh-waramcafe, randomly filming myself and found @nikolajwil-liamcw aka Jaime Lannister standing just behind me'.

Nikolaj Coster-Waldau surprised his fans at City's Rameshwaram Cafe on Sunday ***PHOTO: X @therameshwaramcafe***

CPI(M) FLAYS CENTRE FOR ITS 'PRO CORPORATE' POLICIES

MYSURU, 27 JULY

CPI (M) State Executive Secretary U Basavaraj on Sunday criticised the Union government for its pro-corporate policies and neglecting the interests of farmers, labourers and working-class people in the nation.

He was addressing a public rally organised by the District Unit of CPI (M) in the Mysuru.

"The Union government is giving red carpet welcome to the corporate houses" to loot forest, mine resources while the common people were affected by inflation, rise in prices of essential commodities, he said. He added that even though the Union government collected over Rs 50 lakh crore revenue annually from all states, including the 3 to 4 lakh crore from State, it failed to protect the interest of the working class to curb inflation. *—Salar News*

RANGANATHITTU SHUTS

Heavy rains force KRS, other dams to up discharge

MYSURU, 27 JULY

Inflow to major dams in the Cauvery basin in State has shot up following an increase in rainfalls in several regions, inundating several places.

On Sunday, over 50,000 cusecs of water was released from the Krishna Raja Sagar (KRS) dam, which had reached its full reservoir level of 124ft.

Heavy rains in the catchment areas in Kodagu and the Western Ghats over the past two days forced the already full dam to release excess water downstream, resulting in flooding. Residents of low-lying areas have also been alerted to move to safer places.

The release of water also led to the Kapila river submerging a bathing ghat in Nanjangud.

The famous Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary in Srirangapatna shut for visitors as a precautionary measure. Once the water level recedes, the sanctuary will be opened, officials said.

"Boating was suspended on Sunday following a flood warning as surplus water was released from the dam. Depending upon the flood situation, a decision will be taken on whether to extend the closure for tourists' safety," said Deputy Conservator of Forest (Wildlife – Mysuru) KN Basavaraju.

Police have been deployed at the KRS dam site and other spots, including Balamuri, on the river bank to stop people from getting close to the water.

Similarly, excess water was also released from Kabini, Hemavathi, Nugu and Taraka dams due to heavy rains, resulting in flooding downstream.

The release of water also led to the Kapila river submerging a bathing ghat in Nanjangud ***PHOTO: SALAR***

Kabini dam authorities released 45,000 cusecs of water from the dam to the downstream river, while inflow was maintained at 31,000 cusecs. The bridge in front of the Kabini dam was also submerged following the release of a huge amount of water.

With water also released from Taraka dam, a road connecting various villages to Katt Manuganahalli in HD Kote taluk was also submerged.

People living near banks of the village were asked to move to safer places, said Assistant Executive Engineer of Taraka Dam Shekhar Murthy. *—Salar News*

Officials on high alert as rains lash Bidar for a week

BIDAR, 27 JULY

With rains pounding Bidar over the past week, MLA Dr Shailendra Beladale has asked the officials to remain alert and take emergency precautionary measures while the public should remain vigilant.

Dr Shailendra Beladale ***PHOTO: SALAR***

The Bidar South MLA instructed senior officials to visit and inspect whether designated staff are properly cleaning water storage tanks in Anganwadis, schools, colleges, and government residential schools. Gram Panchayat officials should maintain hygiene in and around water supply tanks in the villages, he said. Functionality of water supply pipelines must also be verified. Priority should be given to the purity of drinking water.

Due to ongoing rainfall, classrooms that are structurally weak must not be used for teaching, he added. Education department officials should inspect such classrooms and submit a report.

He warned that heavy rains could damage or collapse homes; hence, people should avoid staying in dilapidated rooms. Revenue department officials should inspect such houses and take necessary action.While the rain has significantly boosted crop growth, reports of damage due to excessive rain have also started to emerge. A comprehensive report on the impact of the rain must be prepared, the MLA directed. *—Salar News*

PHOTO: PTI

Teach Telugu in Singapore schools: Andhra CM

SINGAPORE, 27 JULY

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu is on a five-day official visit to Singapore to attract investment, promote Telugu culture, and strengthen diaspora ties. Welcomed with traditional dances at Changi Airport, Naidu addressed 2,000 Telugu-origin residents, urging Telugu be introduced as a second language in Singaporean schools. Naidu launched a Global CXO Club and announced a Global Export-Import Cell to support 3 million Non-Resident Telugus across 128 countries. Highlighting Rs 30,000 crore in annual remittances, he promoted his 'P4' model—Public-Private-People Partnerships—for poverty eradication. *—PTI*

Patients treated under torchlight in UP govt hospital

BALLIA, 27 JULY

After a video of patients being treated in torchlight at the emergency room of the district hospital here went viral, health department officials on Sunday said the situation arose due to a combination of power outage in the area and a technical glitch in the hospital's generator. Chief Medical Superintendent of Ballia hospital Dr S K Yadav told PTI that power supply in the area was disrupted on Friday evening. The generator that supplies power to the emergency medical building also had a technical problem, resulting in an outage that lasted 45 minutes. After the issue came to light, a sufficient number of inverters were installed in the emergency medical room, he said. *—PTI*

Guv seeks Bengal govt's response on Aparajita Bill

KOLKATA, 27 JULY

West Bengal Governor CV Ananda Bose has returned the Aparajita Women and Child (West Bengal Criminal Laws Amendment) Bill to the state government, citing objections raised by the Centre. The Bill, passed unanimously in September 2024 following the alleged rape and murder of a medical trainee in Kolkata, proposes harsher punishments for rape, including life imprisonment or the death penalty. Governor Bose stated that the Bill's scope requires examination by the President and urged the state to respond to the Home Ministry's concerns. The Bill seeks to amend provisions under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, prompting legal scrutiny. The Governor may eventually refer the Bill to the President if the state's response does not resolve the constitutional issues raised. *—PTI*

Sakthan elected as T'puram DCC's interim chief

T'PURAM, 27 JULY

Senior Congress leader N Sakthan has been appointed interim president of the Thiruvananthapuram District Congress Committee (DCC) following Palode Ravi's resignation after a leaked phone call. In the call, Ravi predicted a poor performance for Congress in the upcoming local and Assembly elections, sparking concern among party leaders. The Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) demanded his resignation and expelled local leader A Jaleel, who was part of the conversation, for anti-party activities. Sakthan, a former Assembly Speaker and Minister, said he would use his experience to strengthen the party. With local body elections expected in December and Assembly polls due by May, the KPCC moved swiftly to limit damage. *—PTI*

Parl set for fiery debate on Pahalgam, Op Sindoor

The Centre has agreed to a 16-hour long discussion

NEW DELHI, 27 JULY

The first week of disruption in Parliament's Monsoon session is set to give way to a fiery debate on the Pahalgam attack and Operation Sindoor from Monday as the ruling alliance and the Opposition will lock horns over the two issues framed around national security and foreign policy imperatives.

While both the ruling and Opposition parties are expected to field their top guns, sources said Home Minister Amit Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will be speaking on the issues.

PM Narendra Modi may make an intervention to convey his government's track record of a "robust" stand on national security.

Leaders of the Opposition in both Houses, Rahul Gandhi and Mallikarjun Kharge, may lead the charge against the government along with SP's Akhilesh Yadav, among others. The two sides have consented to a marathon 16-hour debate in each House, which invariably stretches longer in practice.

All eyes are on Congress MP Shashi Tharoor after his recent rift with his party *PHOTO: PTI*

WHO WILL THAROOR SPEAK FOR?

Besides its battery of ministers and leaders like Anurag Thakur, Sudhanshu Trivedi and Nishikant Dubey, the ruling NDA is expected to field its members from the seven multi-party delegations that had travelled to over 30 world capitals to present India's case after Operation Sindoor.

A big question mark is on whether Shashi Tharoor, who had led the delegation to the US among other countries, will be picked as speaker by the Congress, as the seasoned Lok Sabha member's enthusiastic endorsement of the government's action following the terror attack has soured his ties with his party.

- A bone of contention between the government and the Opposition is the latter's demand for a discussion in Parliament about the SIR process underway in Bihar

Opposition parties have framed their public criticism of the government around the alleged intelligence lapses behind the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack, which left 26 civilians killed, and US President Donald Trump's claims of mediating a ceasefire between India and Pakistan.

ELECTORAL REVISION

A bone of contention that remains between the government and the Opposition is the latter's demand for a discussion in Parliament over the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar by the Election Commission.

A united Opposition stalled Parliament in the first week, primarily over electoral poll revision in Bihar. *—PTI*

BIHAR POLL DRAMA

Uncle won't return as CM: Tej Pratap on Nitish

PATNA, 27 JULY

Former Bihar minister Tej Pratap Yadav on Saturday claimed that Chief Minister Nitish Kumar will not return to power in the upcoming Assembly elections.

"Uncle won't become CM this time," Yadav said, adding that "Team Tej Pratap Yadav" aims to directly connect with the people.

Hasanpur MLA Tej Pratap, who was recently expelled from the RJD for six years by his father, Lalu Prasad Yadav, also announced that he would contest the upcoming Bihar Assembly elections from Mahua seat in Vaishali district as an Independent candidate.

PANEL FOR SANITATION WORKERS' UPLIFTMENT

Meanwhile, Nitish on Sunday announced on X a commission for the socio-economic upliftment of sanitation workers.

"Bihar State Safai Karmachari Commission to ensure the protection, welfare, rehabilitation, social upliftment, grievance redressal and monitoring of various welfare

schemes for the rights and interests of sanitation workers...," the CM said months ahead of the polls.

SC TO HEAR SIR-PLEAS ON 28 JULY

The Supreme Court is set to continue hearing on Monday, a batch of pleas challenging the EC's Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in poll-bound Bihar. continue with the exercise.

—Agencies

HC pulls up UP govt over 'fake' Arya Samaj societies

PRYAGRAJ, 27 JULY

The Allahabad High Court has ordered the Uttar Pradesh government to launch an investigation into "fake" Arya Samaj societies allegedly involved in solemnising marriages with mala fide intent.

The directive states that some of these societies are registering marriages without verifying the age or consent of the bride and groom. The Court instructed that the inquiry be conducted by an officer not below the rank of Deputy Commissioner of Police.

The order was passed while hearing a petition filed by Sonu alias Shahnur, who sought the quashing of a 12 September, 2024 summons issued in a rape and abduction case related to his alleged marriage. The woman involved was a minor when they reportedly married at an Arya Samaj Mandir in Prayagraj in February 2020 and lived in a Nari Niketan until reaching majority.

- The order was passed while hearing a petition filed by Sonu alias Shahnur, who sought the quashing of a 12 September, 2024 summons issued in a rape and abduction case related to his alleged marriage.

Justice Prasant Kumar observed that both parties belonged to different religions and the marriage lacked lawful conversion, as required under the Uttar Pradesh Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Act, 2021. The defence also argued that the marriage was void since the girl was minor. *—PTI*

PM announces statues for iconic Tamil kings

G CHOLAPURAM, 27 JULY

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday announced construction of grand statues of iconic Chola emperors, Rajaraja Chola and his son, Rajendra Chola I, in Tamil Nadu. Addressing people on Aadi Thiruvathirai, a festival to honour the birth anniversary of Rajendra Chola-I, the PM said these statues will serve as modern pillars of India's historical consciousness.

"The economic and military heights India reached during the Chola era continue to inspire us even today," he added.

The PM said Operation Sindoor showed the world the way India would respond if its sovereignty was attacked and that the cross-border military offensive has created a new self-confidence across the country. It also proved that for enemies and terrorists targeting India, there is no safe haven, Modi said in his address.

EPS meets Modi

On the day the PM landed in Tamil Nadu, on Saturday night, AIADMK General Secretary and former CM of Tamil Nadu, Edappadi K Palaniswami met Modi at the Tiruchirappalli airport, the party said. Palaniswami interacted with the PM for a feminutes, a first meet between the two since the renewal of AIADMK-BJP alliance this April.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi offers prayers at the Gangaikonda Cholapuram in Ariyalur on Sunday *PHOTO: ANI*

- CM Stalin has urged the Centre to release its share of over Rs 2,100 crore under the Samagra Shiksha Scheme (SSA), while underscoring its commitment to the two-language formula

STALIN SEEKS RS 2,100 CR

In a memorandum handed over to Prime Minister Narendra Modi by Tamil Nadu Finance Minister Thangam Thennarasu on Saturday, Chief Minister MK Stalin urged the Centre to release its share of over Rs 2,100 crore under the Samagra Shiksha Scheme (SSA), while underscoring its commitment for the two-language formula. Stalin also pointed out in the memorandum that the Centre not sanctioning the required funds "affects the future of lakhs of students. *— Agencies*

Sule wants CBI probe as Ladki Bahin benefits 14,000 men

PUNE, 27 JULY

Supriya Sule, working president of the NCP (SP), has raised serious concerns regarding the Mukhyamantri Mazhi Ladki Bahin scheme, claiming that approximately 14,000 men improperly received benefits under the initiative, which was launched in August 2024.

Demanding an investigation by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to determine how these men were enrolled, Sule highlighted that nearly Rs 21 crore was disbursed to them.

During a press interaction in Pune, Sule stated, "The government is quick to initiate CBI or ED probes for minor allegations. This issue merits an investigation into who facilitated the enrolment of these men into the scheme."

He affirmed that funds would be recovered from any male beneficiaries and warned strict action against non-cooperating people. *—Agenciies*

SIA charges 2 with LeT-links in 46kg heroin case

JAMMU,27 JULY

The State Investigation Agency (SIA) has filed its first chargesheet in a high-profile narco-terror case involving the seizure of 46kg of heroin in Jammu and Punjab in August last year, exposing links to the Pakistan-based proscribed outfit Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), an official said on Sunday.

The case began with the arrest of Sartaj Singh, a resident of Punjab, who was caught with over 33.5kg of heroin near Jammu Bus

Stand on 9 August, following specific intelligence inputs. Subsequent investigation led to the identification of a second accused, Amritpal Singh alias Fouji, who fled with another consignment but was later arrested. Due to the case's international ramifications and emerging terror links, it was transferred to SIA Jammu under the NDPS Act and Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. Investigations established Amritpal Singh's connection to a Pakistan-based LeT handler, confirming a narco-terrorism nexus.

The SIA described it as a major breakthrough in disrupting terror funding through drug trafficking, underlining the threat posed by transnational criminal-terror networks . *— PTI*

TMC'S ACTION PLAN

Helplines, task forces, cells for Bengalis

KOLKATA, 27 JULY

In an escalating political tussle, the TMC government in West Bengal has initiated measures, to address the distress of Bengali-speaking migrant workers, allegedly facing harassment across several Indian states. Reports of profiling and detention of these workers have prompted the government to set up a WhatsApp helpline, re-engage district migrant welfare cells, and activate grassroots task forces.

TMC Minister Manas Bhunia highlighted a "coordinated and calibrated" approach to assist families of distressed migrants in high-risk areas. Local task forces created across various districts are tasked with verifying complaints and facilitating documentation for affected families.

TMC leaders reaffirmed their commitment to protect Bangladeshi migrants, asserting that their humanitarian response also has political implications ahead of the 2026 Assembly polls.

Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU) members take out a protest rally condemning the alleged harassment of Bengali-speaking migrant labourers in other states in Krishnanagar, Nadia district, West Bengal *PHOTO: PTI*

Political analyst Subhomoy Moitra suggested that this could bolster TMC's standing among voters. Meanwhile, Chatterjee expressed concerns that the Election Commission is acting under BJP influence, warning of divisive rhetoric surrounding the issue of illegal immigration.

TMC leaders and activists also took out rallies across West Bengal to protest against alleged atrocities on Bengali-speaking migrant workers in BJP-ruled states. The processions disrupted vehicular movement in parts of central and south Kolkata.

In contrast, Congress staged a protest in Kolkata against the proposed Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls similar to that underway in Bihar. *—PTI*

Pune party bust: Ex-min's son-in-law, 6 others held

PUNE, 27 JULY

PHOTO: SCREENGRAB

Pune Police have arrested seven individuals following a raid on a "drug party" at a studio apartment early on Sunday. Among those detained is Pranjal Khewalkar, husband of Rohini Khadse, daughter of former Maharashtra minister Eknath Khadse.

The police's Crime Branch conducted the operation in the Kharadi area at approximately 3.30am, acting on a tip-off regarding a rave party. Deputy Commissioner of Police (Crime) Nikhil Pingle confirmed the seizure of 2.7gm of a cocaine-like substance, 70gm of a ganja-like substance, a hookah setup, various flavours, and liquor bottles.

The suspects, who also include Nikhil Poptani, Sameer Sayyad, Shripad Yadav, Sachin Bhombe, Isha Singh, and Prachi Sharma, have been booked under relevant sections of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act. Medical examinations for all detainees are pending.

- The suspects have been booked under relevant sections of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act., while medical exams are pending.

Eknath Khadse has called for an investigation to determine if the police action was politically motivated, while Shiv Sena (UBT) deputy leader Sushma Andhare suggested the raid serves as a warning to critics of the government.

—PTI

PHOTO: PTI

BJD member held for rape; party suspends him

BHUBANESWAR, 27 JULY

Amaresh Jena, a Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation corporator affiliated with the Biju Janata Dal (BJD), was arrested in Balasore on Sunday following a rape allegation. He faces charges, including rape and criminal intimidation after a 19-year-old woman accused him of sexual exploitation and forcing her to undergo an abortion. Jena had evaded police for several days before being located in Nilgiri. Upon his arrest, the BJD suspended him immediately, asserting that the party prioritises women's rights and will abide by the law. Police also detained five aides for assisting him. The survivor has undergone a medical test, and police are continuing their investigation. Denying the allegations, Jena called it a political conspiracy. *—PTI*

60 students taken ill in T'gana after eating dinner

HYDERABAD, 27 JULY

60 students from a government-run Girls Residential School in Nagarkurnool district in Telangana have been admitted to hospital with symptoms of vomiting and abdominal pain after a dinner. A total of 64 students fell ill and were taken to the local government hospital, with their condition reported as stable. Health officials indicated that curd served may not have been fully fermented, leading to the students' illnesses. Of the 64 students admitted, 50 were discharged following treatment. The matter will be investigated, with food samples and drinking water being collected for testing. Authorities stated that the results would help identify the exact cause of the illness and determine necessary actions. *—PTI*

Woman 'beaten to death' in UP over dowry

MUZAFFARNAGAR, 27 JULY

A 28-year-old woman, identified as Shama, was allegedly beaten to death by her in-laws over dowry demands in Phulat village on Saturday, according to local police. Police officials said that a case was registered against five individuals, including Shama's husband, Anas, who is currently absconding. The victim's brother, Shahvez, reported that Shama married Anas two years ago and was subjected to harassment over a dowry of Rs 5 lakh. While her family provided Rs 1 lakh, the demands persisted. The police confirmed that Shama's body has been sent for a post-mortem examination following the alleged incident. Investigations are ongoing as authorities seek to apprehend Anas and the other accused. *—PTI*

Art lovers want Bharat Ratna for Bhojpuri writer

PATNA, 27 JULY

Advocates for Bhojpuri arts are fervently calling for the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian honour, to be posthumously awarded to Bihar-born legend Bhikhari Thakur, a celebrated playwright and social reformer often likened to William Shakespeare. BJP MPs Manoj Tiwari and Ravi Kishan submitted formal requests to the Centre in support of this demand. Thakur, who lived from 1887 to 1971, created impactful works that addressed social issues prevalent in his time, notably through plays like 'Bidesiya' and 'Ganga-Snan'. Tiwari hailed Thakur as a pivotal figure in folk art. The push for recognition underscores Thakur's enduring influence on Bhojpuri culture, with cultural revival efforts ongoing across India and beyond. *—PTI*

Over 7,000 heatstrokes, 14 deaths in India this yr: RTI

2024 witnessed 48,000 heatstrokes, 159 heat-related deaths

NEW DELHI, 27 JULY:

India reported 7,192 suspected heatstroke cases and only 14 confirmed deaths due to extreme heat between 1 March 1 and 24 June this year, according to data obtained under the Right to Information (RTI) Act.

The country had reported nearly 48,000 cases of heatstroke and 159 deaths due to extreme heat in 2024, the warmest year on record in India since 1901.

The data, shared by the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), reveals that the majority of cases were reported in May, the peak of the summer season, with 2,962 suspected cases and three confirmed deaths. April saw 2,140 suspected cases and six confirmed deaths, while March recorded 705 cases and two deaths. During June, up to June 24, 1,385 suspected cases and three deaths were documented.

The data show that the majority of cases were reported in May, the peak of the summer season *PHOTO: PTI*

Andhra Pradesh accounted for over half of the total suspected heatstroke cases at 4,055 followed by Rajasthan with 373 cases, Odisha with 350, Telangana with 348 and Madhya Pradesh with 297 cases.

Maharashtra and Uttarakhand reported the highest number of confirmed heatstroke deaths, at three each. Telangana, Odisha, Jharkhand, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal reported one death each.

For 2015-2022, the NCDC recorded 3,812 heat-related deaths, the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) reported 8,171, and the India Meteorological Department (IMD) reported 3,436.

Many hospitals are understaffed, which hampers timely and accurate reporting.

Several states earlier failed to submit complete data to the NCDC. Authorities were accused of suppressing death figures to avoid compensation claims.

Many heat-related deaths are misclassified as heart attacks or other causes.

Experts say the absence of a single comprehensive reporting system weakens India's ability to prepare for and respond to extreme heat events. *—PTI*

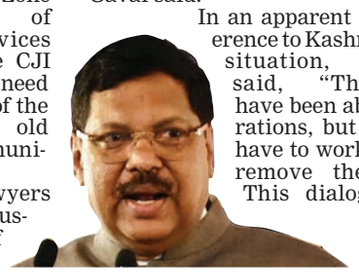
No use of rights without knowledge: CJI

SRINAGAR, 27 JULY

Rights without knowledge are of no use, Chief Justice of India BR Gavai said on Sunday, emphasising the importance of making citizens aware of their rights.

Addressing the North Zone Regional Conference of National Legal Services Authority (NALSA), the CJI also said that there was a need to undo the aberrations of the past and restore the old Kashmir where all communities lived in harmony.

"The judges and lawyers together have to ensure justice for the last citizen of the country. The NALSA works in this direction, and we try to take the NALSA work to remote areas of the country – be it in Ladakh, the Northeast or Rajasthan. Unless people have the knowledge of their rights, the rights are of no use," CJI Gavai said.



- At the North Zone Regional Conference of the NALSA, the CJI said there was a need to undo the aberrations of the past and restore the old Kashmir where all communities lived in harmony

In an apparent reference to Kashmir situation, he said, "There have been aberrations, but we have to work to remove these. This dialogue between judges and lawyers will give a new perspective. I am sure this programme will help in rebuilding the traditional Kashmir where all communities – Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs – used to live together." *—PTI*

Man attempts rape in Odisha varsity

BALASORE, 27 JULY

A man has been arrested for allegedly attempting to rape the wife of an assistant professor of Fakir Mohan University in Balasore district at the staff quarters on the campus, police said on Sunday.

Shankar Patra, posing as an LPG stove mechanic, entered the quarters on Saturday and grabbed the woman, they said. However, the woman managed to escape and locked herself in another room, called up her husband and screamed for help. The security personnel caught accused and handed him over to police. *—PTI*

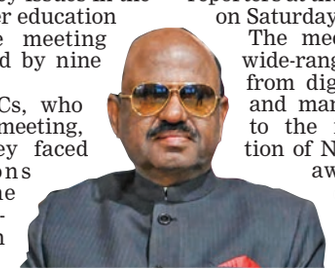
CHANCELLOR'S POWERS

WB Guv to move SC over control of universities

KOLKATA, 27 JULY

In an escalation of the ongoing tussle between the West Bengal government and the Raj Bhavan over higher education governance, Governor CV Ananda Bose said he plans to seek clarity from the Supreme Court on whether the ultimate authority over state universities lies with the chancellor (governor) or the state administration.

The move comes after a meeting between Bose and vice chancellors (VCs) of state-run universities at the Raj Bhavan, convened to address key issues in the state's higher education sector. The meeting was attended by nine VCs.



Several VCs, who skipped the meeting, claimed they faced obstructions from the higher education department, while others alleged they faced hostile conditions on campus. Some sought appointments with the governor to explain their absence.

Sources in Raj Bhavan suggested absenteeism has not been taken lightly.

"This is an issue that requires clarification. What is the role of the chancellor or the government? The Supreme Court will be approached to determine who holds the ultimate authority over state universities -- the chancellor (governor) or the state government," Bose told reporters at the Raj Bhavan on Saturday.

The meeting had a wide-ranging agenda, from digital reforms and manpower gaps to the implementation of NEP 2020 and awareness on cybersecurity and drug addiction. *—PTI*

HC CLOSES 10 LONG-PENDING CASES

NEW DELHI, 27 JULY

The Jharkhand High Court has delivered verdicts on 10 convicts, including six on death row, in a week, after they moved the SC, complaining delay in deciding their appeals against conviction despite the verdicts being reserved years ago.

The SC agreed to examine their pleas, seeking a response from the state government and the high court within a week.

The HC had set aside the convictions and sentences of life convicts Amit Kumar Das and Basant Kumar Mahto. While Das had been released from jail, Mahato remained behind bars, as the judgement was not uploaded.

The top court ordered Mahto's release, subject to furnishing bail bonds.

The authority concerned was directed to grant free legal aid to others convicts, whose appeal against convictions and sentences were dismissed, so that they can seek their remedy or for remission. *—PTI*

The analysis also showed that 199 districts reported malnutrition levels between 30 per cent and 40 per cent *PHOTO: PTI*

Anganwadi kids face inadequate nutrition

NEW DELHI, 27 JULY

As many as 63 districts across 13 states and Union Territories, including 34 in Uttar Pradesh, have reported that more than 50 per cent of children enrolled in anganwadis are stunted, found an analysis.

The analysis also showed that 199 districts reported stunting levels between 30 per cent and 40 per cent.

Stunting is a form of chronic undernutrition that occurs when small children do not receive adequate nutrition over a long period of time.

According to the data based on the Ministry of Women and Child Development's Poshan Tracker for June 2025, some of the worst-affected districts with highest level of stunting include Nandurbar in Maharashtra (68.12 per cent), West Singhbhum in Jharkhand (66.27 per cent), Chitrakoot in Uttar Pradesh (59.48 per cent), Shivpuri in Madhya Pradesh (58.20 per cent), and Bongaigaon in Assam (54.76 per cent).

Uttar Pradesh leads with 34 districts showing stunting levels above 50 per cent, followed by Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Bihar and Assam.

The situation is equally serious in terms of underweight children. *—PTI*

BMW CRASHES INTO SCOOTER; 1 DEAD, 2 INJURED

NOIDA, 27 JULY

A speeding BMW collided with a scooter in Noida in Uttar Pradesh, resulting in the death of a five-year-old girl and injuries to two others. The victim, identified as Ayaat, had just exited the Post Graduate Institute of Child Health along with her father and uncle, when the incident occurred.

The injured individuals, Gul Mohammad and Raja, were also involved in the collision. Police have arrested the driver, Yash Sharma, 22, and his passenger, Abhishek Rawat, also 22, both from Noida. They were charged with reckless driving and death by negligence.

The suspects were reportedly returning from a birthday party and police are trying to determine if they were under the influence of alcohol. The BMW, borrowed from an acquaintance, was impounded. *—PTI*

A man carries another on his back as he wades through the waterlogged KSRTC bus stand in Ernakulam after heavy rains lashed the city on Saturday *PHOTO: PTI*

Rivers in spate as rains lash Kerala

T,PURAM, 27 JULY

Kerala is grappling with heavy rainfall and strong winds, leading to rising water levels in various rivers and dams. In Wayanad district, the Banasura Sagar dam has opened its shutters by 85cm, releasing approximately 100 cubic feet per second of water, prompting warnings for residents along the riverbanks and low-lying areas.

In Pathanamthitta, all shutters of the Moozhiyar reservoir were opened as water levels exceeded the 'red alert' threshold. Authorities have issued flood warnings for several rivers across the state, including in Pathanamthitta, Ernakulam, and Thrissur.

The India Meteorological Department has also declared a 'yellow alert' for nine districts. Residents in vulnerable areas are urged to remain vigilant and prepare for potential evacuations. *—PTI*

THREE BATHINDA SISTERS DEFY ODDS, CLEAR UGC-NET

BATHINDA, 27 JULY

Three daughters of a daily wager mother and priest father, brute-forced their way into academics by clearing the University Grants Commission-National Eligibility Test (UGC-NET), despite tough odds.

Rimpi Kaur, Hardeep Kaur and Beant Kaur, aged 28, 23, and 26, respectively, hail from Budhlada in Mansa district, the least literate district in the state.

The three of them cleared the UGC-NET in different subjects.

The results of the exams conducted by the National Testing Agency were declared recently.

"My elder sister wants to be a professor in computer science, while Hardeep Kaur and I are working hard for a JRF (Junior Research Fellowship). We are confident we will get it. Only studies can take us out of poverty," Beant Kaur said. *—PTI*

25 PAISE PER MONTH

Clerical error turns MP farmer 'India's poorest'

SATNA, 27 JULY

A certificate showing a Madhya Pradesh farmer's annual income as Rs 3 went viral on social media with the Internet dubbing him as the "poorest man in India", prompting the authorities to clarify that it was a "clerical error".

A photograph of the income certificate issued to Ramswaroop, 45, a resident of Nayagaon village under Kothi tehsil of Satna district in Madhya Pradesh, complete with the tehsildar's signature, surfaced on social media this week.

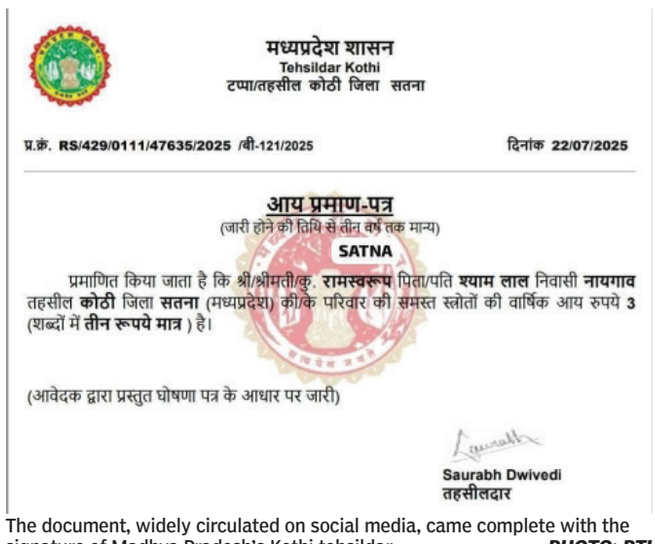
The document, issued with the signature of Tehsildar Saurabh Dwivedi on 22 July, was circulated widely on social media, with netizens calling Ramswaroop the "poorest man in the country".

Officials soon scrambled into action, and by 25 July, a new certificate was issued, which boosted the farmer's reported annual income to Rs 30,000, i.e., Rs 2,500 per month.

The original certificate implied Ramswaroop earned 25 paise a month. "It was a clerical error, which has been corrected. A new income certificate has been issued," Dwivedi clarified.

The Madhya Pradesh Congress pounced on the blunder, sharing the original certificate on X.

"In MP Chief Minister Mohan Yadav's rule, we discovered India's poorest man! Annual income: just Rs 3!" the party claimed in its post. *—PTI*



मध्यप्रदेश शासन
Tehsildar Kothi
टप्पा/तहसील कोठी जिला सतना

प्र.क्रं. RS/429/0111/47635/2025 /बी-121/2025 दिनांक 22/07/2025

आय प्रमाण-पत्र
(जारी होने की तिथि से तीन वर्ष तक मान्य)
SATNA

प्रमाणित किया जाता है कि श्री/श्रीमती/कु. **रामस्वरूप** पिता/पति **श्याम लाल** निवासी **नायगाव** तहसील **कोठी** जिला **सतना** (मध्यप्रदेश) की/के परिवार की समस्त स्त्रोतों की वार्षिक आय रुपये **3** (शब्दों में **तीन रूपये मात्र**) है।

(आवेदक द्वारा प्रस्तुत घोषणा पत्र के आधार पर जारी)

Saurabh Dwivedi
तहसीलदार

The document, widely circulated on social media, came complete with the signature of Madhya Pradesh's Kothi tehsildar *PHOTO: PTI*

M'rashtra woman poisons 3 minor daughters; held

THANE, 27 JULY

A 27-year-old woman was arrested on Sunday for allegedly poisoning her three minor daughters in Maharashtra's Thane, police said.

Sandhya Sandeep Bere, a housewife, allegedly mixed a pesticide in "varan bhat" and served it to her daughters, aged 5, 8 and 10, on 20 July.

The girls soon experienced health complications and were rushed to a local hospital. Even after being treated for a few days, they couldn't be saved.

Though cops initially registered a case of accidental death, the autopsy report on Saturday night confirmed the presence of poison in the children's bodies.

- Though cops initially registered a case of accidental death, the autopsy report on Saturday night confirmed the presence of poison in the children's bodies. They immediately arrested the children's mother

Acting swiftly on the crucial evidence, the police registered a case of murder against the children's mother and arrested her around 2 am on Sunday, the official said.

The accused had been grappling with domestic issues, including her now-separated husband's habit of liquor consumption, as per the police. *—PTI*

WHERE WILL FOUND THE WAY

Tired of years of unfulfilled promises, the residents of Bedi Fartala, a remote tribal village in Madhya Pradesh's Barwani district, took matters into their own hands. With the monsoon looming, they knew they couldn't wait any longer. The villagers built a 4.3km road in just 14 days, without a single rupee of government aid. A village meeting sparked the movement. Every household contributed in whatever way they could. Some brought tools, others prepared food, and many came with nothing but their bare hands and determination

PHOTO: SCREENGRAB

Years of stampedes yet no progress on crowd safety

A stampede at Haridwar's hilltop Mansa Devi temple, where hundreds of devotees had gathered on Sunday, left at least six people dead and several injured.

This is not the first time that a large number of people have died in stampedes at temples and other religious gatherings over the years in India.

More than 70 people have died in stampedes occurring during temple celebrations, at railway stations and at the Maha Kumbh so far this year, including Sunday's incident.

Here is a list of some of the major stampedes that occurred in the country over the last two decades:

Over 11 people were killed during a stampede outside Chinnaswamy Stadium on 4 June ***PHOTO: PTI***

● 4 June, 2025:
An RCB parade in celebration of the maiden IPL win after 18 years became a horrific sight, leaving at least 11 people dead and several injured in a stampede near the Chinnaswamy Stadium.

● 3 May, 2025:
Six people died and around 100 people were injured in the stampede in the early hours during an annual festival of Sri Lairai Devi temple at Shirgao village in Goa.

● 15 February, 2025:
Eighteen people, including women and children, died in a stampede at the New Delhi Railway Station. They were waiting to board the train to Prayagraj for Maha Kumbh.

● 29 January, 2025:
Thirty people were killed and 60 were injured at a stampede at the Sangam area of the Maha Kumbh as millions of pilgrims jostled for space to participate in 'Amrit Snan'.

● 8 January, 2025:
Six devotees were killed and dozens were injured in a stampede as hundreds of them jostled for tickets for Vaikunta Dwara Darshanam at Lord Venkateswara Swamy temple in Tirumala Hills.

● 4 December, 2024:
A 35-year-old woman died and a boy was injured at Sandhya Theatre in Hyderabad in a stampede where Allu Arjun's blockbuster 'Pushpa 2' was screened.

● 2 July, 2024:
Between 100 and 120 people, including women and children, were killed after a stampede broke out at a 'satsang' (prayer meeting) organised by a self-styled godman, Bhole Baba aka Narayan Saakar Hari, in Uttar Pradesh's Hathras.

● 31 March, 2023:
Thirty-six people died when the slab constructed on top of an ancient 'bawdi' or well collapsed during a 'havan' programme held on the occasion of Ram Navami at a temple in Indore city.

● 1 January, 2022:
Twelve people died and over a dozen were injured in a stampede at the famous Mata Vaishno Devi shrine in Jammu and Kashmir triggered by a heavy rush of devotees.

● 29 September, 2017:
Twenty-three people lost their lives and 36 were injured in the stampede on the narrow bridge connecting the Elphinstone Road station of the Western Railway with Parel station of the Central Railway in Mumbai.

● 14 July, 2015:
Twenty-seven pilgrims died and 20 others were injured in a stampede at a major bathing spot on the banks of the Godavari river where a huge crowd of devotees had gathered on the opening day of the 'Pushkaram' festival in Rajahmundry in Andhra Pradesh

● 3 October, 2014:
Thirty-two people were killed and 26 others injured in a stampede at Gandhi Maidan in Patna, shortly after the Dussehra celebrations ended.

● 13 October, 2013:
115 people were killed and over 100 injured in a stampede during the Navratri festivities near Ratangarh temple in Madhya Pradesh's Datia district. The stampede was triggered by rumours that a river bridge the devotees were crossing was about to collapse.

● 19 November, 2012:
Eighteen people were killed and many others injured as a makeshift bridge caved in, triggering a stampede during the Chhath Puja at Adalat Ghat on one of the banks of the Ganga River in Patna.

● 8 November, 2011:
Twenty people were killed in a stampede in Haridwar at Har-ki-Pauri ghat near Ganga river.

● 14 January, 2011:
A stampede caused by a jeep crashing into pilgrims at Pulmedu in Kerala's Idukki district left 104 Sabarimala devotees dead and over 40 injured.

● 4 March, 2010:
Sixty-three people were killed in a stampede at Ram Janki Temple of Kripalu Maharaj in Uttar Pradesh's Pratapgarh district as people gathered to collect free clothes and food from the self-styled godman.

● 30 September, 2008:
Between 220 and 250 devotees were killed and over 60 injured in a stampede triggered by rumours of a bomb going off at Chamunda Devi temple in Rajasthan's Jodhpur city.

● 3 August, 2008:
A stampede triggered by rumours of rockslides at Naina Devi temple in Himachal Pradesh's Bilaspur district left 162 dead and 47 injured.

● 25 January, 2005:
Around 340 devotees were trampled to death during an annual pilgrimage at Mandhardevi temple in Maharashtra's Satara district. The accident occurred when some people fell down the steps made slippery by the devotees breaking coconuts..

—PTI

SALAR ساہر

Monks, dancers offer respite amid Thai, Cambodia clash

Long-simmering tensions over disputed border territory between Cambodia and Thailand have erupted into armed conflict, leaving dozens dead on both sides and displacing tens of thousands.

Both governments blame each other for the outbreak of violence, which began Thursday, and neither side has accepted responsibility for the first shots fired. While regional and international organisations have called for a ceasefire, mediation efforts have so far failed to spark formal peace talks.

Amid the destruction and uncertainty, acts of compassion and community support are offering brief moments of relief.

In Thailand's northeastern Surin province, a Buddhist temple near the border has taken unusual steps to protect its residents. Located just 10 kilometres from the frontier, the temple—unnamed for safety reasons—has constructed a concrete bunker to shield against shelling.

The abbot, Phut Analayo, said the bunker was built swiftly after a brief armed clash in May hinted at rising tensions. Donations from the community funded materials, while monks and local villagers completed construction in under five days. Built from large precast concrete drainage pipes, the bunker is protected with earth mounds, metal sheeting, and steel frames. It contains two tubular rooms, each four metres long, fitted with electricity and basic kitchen equipment.

Now home to six monks and around a dozen villagers, the shelter offers refuge during nightly shelling. "When we need to use the bathroom, we wait to make sure it's quiet outside," said Phut Analayo.

The temple has paused religious ceremonies, but the monks remain. "If I leave, the people who rely on us will lose their spirit," he said. "I'm scared too, but I'll just stay here for now."

Like many Thai temples, the monastery also shelters stray dogs—more than 10 in this case. "If I leave them behind, how will they live?" the abbot asked. "Every life loves their lives all the same."

Meanwhile, senior citizens from Surin province are also contributing to the relief effort. Members of the Ballroom Dance for Health of the Elderly of Surin Province club, who usually spend their time dancing, have redirected their energies toward helping evacuees.

On Saturday, about a dozen of them delivered clothes, toiletries, blankets and pillows to a shelter housing 1,000 people. The initiative was led by retired civil servant and ballroom instructor Chadaporn Duchanee, 62, who first posted about her donation efforts on Facebook. Her students eagerly joined in. "Everyone left in a hurry, without bringing belongings, just trying to escape the line of fire," said Chadaporn. "We want to help."

Across the border in Cambodia, similar efforts are under way. A makeshift donation stall stands by a key road between Siem Reap and Oddar Meanchey, one of the hardest-hit provinces. Stocked with bottled water, fruit, vegetables, and instant noodles, the stall offers supplies to evacuees fleeing the fighting and to soldiers heading toward the front lines.

Chhar Sin, a 28-year-old volunteer from Srey Snam district, helps run the stall. "We're used to seeing people bustling around, but now the streets are quiet. People don't feel safe," she said.

Nearby, 45-year-old shopkeeper Kim Muny chose not to open her store Saturday. Instead, she cooked rice wrapped in banana leaves to feed Cambodian troops and displaced families.

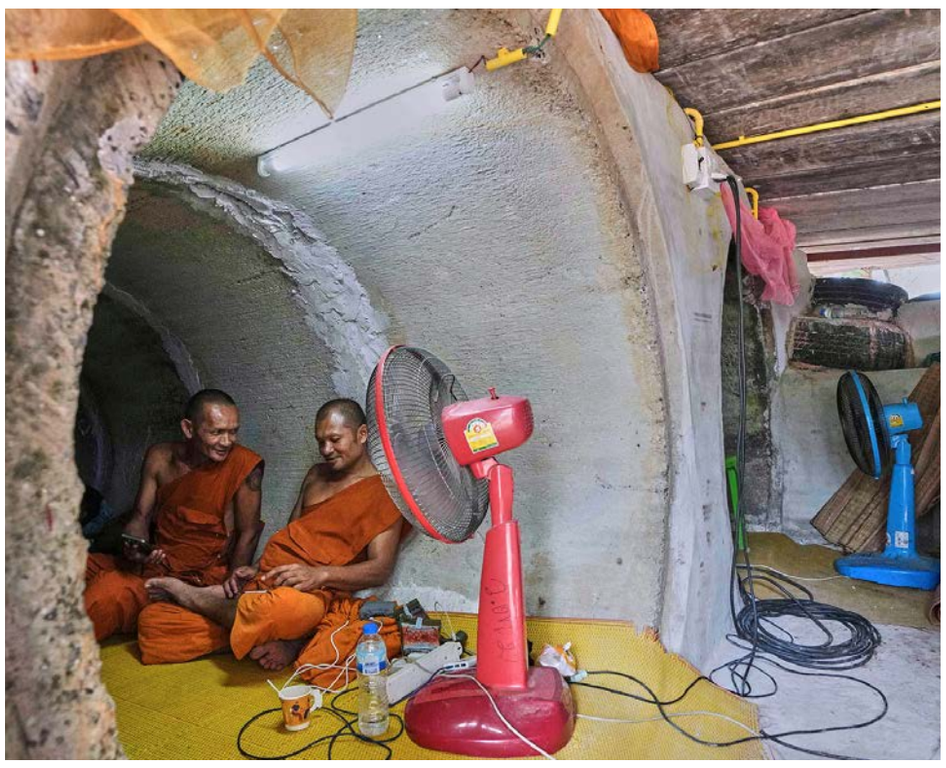
"Cambodians have a kind heart," Kim said. "We know our soldiers don't have time to cook, so we will do it for them."

In Samrong, capital of Cambodia's Oddar Meanchey province, most civilians have already fled. But at Wat Prasat Samrong Thom, chief monk Tho Thoross remains. Of the monastery's 40 monks, only seven have stayed behind.

The 38-year-old led chants of gratitude for life, despite the ongoing shelling and rumours of a Thai military drone overhead. He had ordered the temple's novices—young monks in training—to evacuate to safer areas.

While international bodies urge de-escalation, it is unclear when or if peace talks will take place. For now, ordinary people on both sides of the border continue to find small ways to protect each other and preserve humanity amid chaos.

—PTI



Thai Buddhist monks who fled clashes between Thai and Cambodian soldiers take shelter in Surin province, Thailand ***PHOTO: PTI***

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

Kerala women turn trash into triumph in grassroots green drive

In a quiet village in this north Kerala district, 28 women are reshaping the narrative around waste, cutting down local refuse and carbon emissions through grassroots innovation, while earning money for a dignified living, in the process.

Once limited to sanitation and waste management roles, these women belonging to the Haritha Karma Sena (HKS) at the Kannapuram Grama Panchayat have taken their mission a step further -- transforming discarded materials into opportunity, income, and dignity.

Under their initiative, old clothes find new life in their hands, reshaped into handmade pots, stylish bags, and eco-friendly home accessories. Broken LED bulbs, once tossed aside, are carefully repaired and made functional again.

And instead of promoting single-use plastics at weddings and other local functions, they offer plates and glasses for rent, reducing both waste and cost for the community.

The bags, pots, and inoculum, used to aid in composting wet waste, generate revenue by utilising the garbage collected from households, while the renting out of plates and glasses, under the Haritha Mangalyam initiative, helps to reduce the generation of waste such as used paper or styrofoam cups and plates.

The repairing of LED bulbs helps reduce the carbon footprint and electronic waste, Sujna M, the Kannur District Resource Person under the Suchitwa Mission, told PTI.

Besides being environmentally friendly, the initiatives have also helped to almost double the income of those involved, making them more financially independent, said Nishita, who heads the 28-member HKS in Kannapuram village.

Additionally, the 28 women, aged between 37 and 65 years, also run house-cleaning and dishwashing units, which further help to augment their income, which was earlier entirely dependent on the user fee received from waste collection, she added.

"All these enterprises have helped the women increase their income from around Rs 15,000 per month to Rs 25,000 since October last year, when these initiatives were launched as part of a pilot project," Rathi, president of the Kannapuram Grama Panchayat, told PTI.

She further said that using cloth collected from households to make bags and pots is an important initiative run by the members of the HKS who have also gone to the central prison here as well as schools and colleges to impart training about it.

"Another profitable unit run by the HKS members is the dishwashing unit. It has turned into a good source of income for them," she added.

According to Sujna, Kannapuram is one of the five panchayats in the district that were selected for the pilot project.

"Five grama panchayats — Kannapuram, Chapparapadavu, Payam, Kadirur and Peralassery — were selected as models to implement the green initiatives as part of the overall aim to use HKS for complete waste disposal in the areas under them.

"We are collecting non-degradable and plastic waste from the households. Of all the panchayats in Kerala, Chapparapadavu is the one which has the distinction of completing the work in 10 days," she said, while speaking to PTI.

Additionally, the 28 women, aged between 37 and 65 years, also run house-cleaning and dishwashing units, which further help to augment their income ***PHOTO: HARITHAM.KERALA.GOV.IN***

● In a quiet village in this north Kerala district, 28 women are reshaping the narrative around waste, cutting down local refuse and carbon emissions through grassroots innovation, while earning money for a dignified living, in the process.

Soon we will be establishing a unit in these panchayats for collection of organic waste and converting it into fertiliser for crops, she added.

At Kannapuram, the 28-member HKS unit functions in four clusters in the 14 wards of the panchayat.

Giving details of the work done by them, Nishita said that collection of non-degradable waste from households is usually completed within the first 15 days of a month, leaving the remaining days for them to run these enterprises.

"Rest are run on the basis of orders received. There has been a good increase in our income since we began working on these initiatives," Nishita, who has been part of the HKS for the last six years, told PTI.

The pots cost between Rs 50 to Rs 100 based on their size, the bags are sold at Rs 5 a piece and one LED bulb is repaired for Rs 40 and the 28 members have been provided with an office space and room to carry out these activities, she said.

The LED bulb repairs benefit the house owners who do not have to buy new ones, she said, adding that LED bulbs discarded by people are repaired and used by the HKS for itself.

The overall aim behind these initiatives is to reduce the waste generated in a panchayat and the carbon footprint, Sujana said.

Kannur district has taken up these initiatives as a model, as it has led the way in implementing various other green measures -- like the first 'Haritha' railway station, and the first 'Haritha' jail, she said.

Another reason behind the move is the fact that the HKS members are free for more than half the month after they complete the waste collection process.

"During that time, they do not have the option to go for any other work, including under the MGNREGA scheme, as they may have to work if their services are suddenly required.

"So, all these initiatives were launched to help them earn extra income when they are free," she said.

—PTI

34 killed in IS attack on east Congo church

KINSHASA, 27 JULY

At least 34 people were killed on Sunday in an attack on church premises in eastern Congo by Islamic State-backed rebels, according to a civil society leader. The attack was carried out by members of the Allied Democratic Force (ADF) around1 am inside the premises of a Catholic church in eastern Congo's Komanda. Several houses and shops were also burnt. "More than 21 people were shot dead inside and outside and we have recorded at least three charred bodies and several houses burned. But the search is continuing," Dieudonne Duranthabo, a civil society coordinator in Komnada, told The Associated Press. A spokesperson for the Congolese army in Ituri province, where Komanda is located, confirmed 10 dead. *—PTI*

Seven communist guerrillas killed in Philippines

MANILA, 27 JULY

Philippine troops killed seven communist guerrillas during an offensive on Sunday in Masbate province, marking a significant escalation in the ongoing insurgency. Major Frank Roldan of the army's 9th Infantry Division reported that the clash, which lasted 30 minutes, followed a previous encounter that resulted in the deaths of two New People's Army guerrillas. Troops recovered seven assault rifles and two grenade launchers at the scene, while at least eight rebels escaped. The Armed Forces of the Philippines chief General Romeo Brawner Jr. said last week less than 900 rebels remain, down from an estimated 25,000 at the peak of the 56-year insurgency. Military officials suggest that the guerrilla forces are "on the brink of collapse". *—PTI*

Unknown group tries to seize Awami League HQ

DHAKA, 27 JULY

An unidentified faction operating under the name "International Institute on Fascism and Genocide" has reportedly taken control of the Bangladesh Awami League headquarters in Dhaka. Cleaning activities are underway throughout the building, although the specific orders behind this initiative remain unclear. Shkhawat Hossain, overseeing the cleaning, stated, "This establishment is from the era of the fascist Sheikh Hasina. We want to prevent more fascists from emerging here." A banner announcing the group's presence hangs prominently at the Awami League headquarters on Bangabandhu Avenue, with 10 to 12 workers engaged in the daily cleanup operations. *—ANI*

PHOTO: X

Wildfires threaten Turkey's 4th largest city

ISTANBUL, 27 JULY

Wildfires that have engulfed Turkey for weeks threatened the country's fourth-largest city early Sunday, causing more than 1,700 people to flee their homes and leaving a firefighter dead. Overnight fires in the forested mountains surrounding Bursa in northwest Turkey spread rapidly, tinting the night sky over the city's eastern suburbs with a red glow. Dozens of severe wildfires have hit the country daily since late June, with the government declaring two western provinces, Izmir and Bilecik, disaster areas on Friday. Bursa governor's office said in a statement that more than 1,900 firefighters battled the flames. The highway linking Bursa to the capital, Ankara, was closed as surrounding forests burned. Unseasonally high temperatures, dry conditions and strong winds were fuelling the wildfires. *—PTI*

10-hr pause in strikes on three Gaza cities

Surging hunger draws global flak on Israel

DEIR AL-BALAH, 27 JULY

The Israeli military on Sunday began a limited pause in fighting in three populated areas of Gaza for 10 hours a day, part of a series of steps launched as concerns over surging hunger in the territory mount and as Israel faces a wave of international criticism over its conduct in the 21-month war.

The military said it would begin a "tactical pause" in Gaza City, Deir al-Balah and Muwasi, three areas of the territory with large populations, to "increase the scale of humanitarian aid" entering the territory. The pause begins every day at 10.00am to 8.00pm local time until further notice, beginning Sunday.

The military also said Sunday that it carried out aid airdrops into Gaza, which included packages of aid with flour, sugar and canned food. Similarly, UAE's Deputy Prime Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan said, "We will continue delivering relief support to those most in need – by land, air, and sea," reaffirming the immediate resumption of airdrop operations for humanitarian aid.

A makeshift tent camp located next to buildings destroyed during Israeli air and ground operations in Gaza City **PHOTO: PTI**

However, the Israeli military on Saturday asserted there is "no starvation" in the territory, where most of the population of over 2 million has been displaced into a shrinking area with little infrastructure.

Food experts have warned for months of the risk of famine in Gaza, where Israel has restricted aid. Images emerging from Gaza in recent days of emaciated children have fanned global criticism of Israel, including by close allies, who have called for an end to the war. Israel's measures come while it continues its offensive against Hamas in other areas. *—PTI/ANI*

Israel seizes another aid ship heading to Gaza

TEL AVIV, 27 JULY

The Israeli military has intercepted a Gaza-bound aid ship seeking to break the Israeli blockade of the Palestinian territory, detaining 21 international activists and journalists and seizing all cargo, including baby formula, food and medicine, the Freedom Flotilla Coalition said Sunday.

The coalition that operates the vessel Handala said the Israeli military "violently intercepted" the ship in international waters about 40 nautical miles from Gaza, cutting the cameras and communication, just before midnight Saturday.

"All cargo was non-military, civilian and intended for direct distribution to a population facing deliberate starvation and medical collapse under Israel's illegal blockade," the group said.

It was the second ship operated by the coalition that Israel has prevented in recent months from delivering aid to Gaza, where food experts have for months warned of the risk of famine. Activist Greta Thunberg was among 12 activists on board the ship Madleen when it was seized by the Israeli military in June. *—PTI*

A house damaged after Cambodia fired artillery shells into Surin Province of Thailand on Sunday **PHOTO: PTI**

Thailand, Cambodia 'ready' for ceasefire, but continue war

SURIN, 27 JULY

Thailand and Cambodian leaders will meet in Malaysia for talks to end hostilities, a spokesperson for the Thai Prime Minister's office said on Sunday.

This comes following pressure from US President Donald Trump to end a deadly border dispute, now in its fourth day, which has killed at least 34 people and displaced more than 168,000.

Jirayu Huangsap said Acting Thai Prime Minister Phumtham Wechayachai will attend Monday's talks in response to an invitation from Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim "to discuss peace efforts in the region."

Phumtham's Cambodian counterpart Hun Manet will also attend the talks, though this was not immediately confirmed by the Cambodian side. Manet said earlier Sunday his country agreed to pursue an "immediate and unconditional ceasefire."

Huangsap added that Anwar was acting in his capacity as chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) held on an annual rotating basis by its 10 members.

Trump posted on Truth Social on Saturday that he spoke to the leaders of Thailand and Cambodia and suggested he would not move forward with trade agreements with either country if the hostilities continued.

Thailand on Sunday reported a new death of a soldier, bringing the total number of fatalities to 21, mostly civilians. Cambodia said 13 people have been killed. More than 131,000 people in Thailand have evacuated and over 37,000 people fled from three Cambodian provinces. *—PTI*

Trump to meet EU leaders in Scotland

EDINBURGH, 27 JULY

US President Donald Trump is meeting Sunday with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, taking a break from golfing in Scotland to discuss trade as both sides seek an agreement on tariff rates now that the White House's deadline to impose stiff tariff rates is looming.

The visit with von der Leyen is expected to be behind closed doors.

Leaving the White House on Friday, Trump said "we have a 50-50 chance, maybe less than that, but a 50-50 chance of making a deal with the EU." He said the deal would have to "buy down" the currently scheduled tariff rate of 30% on the bloc of 27 member states.

Trump is also set to meet Monday in Scotland with British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, after the two announced a trade framework in May and a larger agreement last month during the G7 in Canada. Trump says that deal is concluded and that the pair will discuss other matters.

Trump played golf Saturday at his course in Turnberry on the southwest coast of Scotland and is expected to hit the links again frequently during his five-day visit. On Tuesday, he'll be in Aberdeen, in northeast Scotland, where his family has another golf course and is opening a third next month. *—PTI*

President Donald Trump speaks to members of the media after arriving at Prestwick Airport in Ayrshire, Scotland, on Friday **PHOTO: PTI**

US President Donald Trump shared an image depicting former president Barrack Obama in the infamous OJ Simpson car chase **PHOTO: TRUTHSOCIAL @realDonaldTrump**

Trump wants ex-VP Harris prosecuted

NEW YORK, 27 JULY

US President Donald Trump has demanded the prosecution of former vice president Kamala Harris, alleging that she paid a "large amount of money" to celebrity artists for endorsements during last year's Presidential election.

"You are not allowed to pay for an endorsement. It is totally illegal to do so. Can you imagine what would happen if politicians started paying for people to endorse them?" Trump wrote on Truth Social. "All hell would break out!"

Harris was Trump's Democratic opponent during the 2024 Presidential race.

In a post on Truth Social, Trump said that celebrities Beyonce, Oprah and Al Sharpton were paid "ridiculous fees" for "endorsement" and "expenses".

"Kamala, and all of those that received Endorsement money, BROKE THE LAW. They should all be prosecuted!" he said.

According to The Hill newspaper, Oprah previously said she "was not paid a dime" to appear alongside Harris at a live-streamed event. However, production fees were covered by the campaign. *—PTI*

ELEVEN STABBED AT MICHIGAN WALMART; SUSPECT IN CUSTODY

TRAVERSE CITY, 27 JULY

At least 11 individuals were stabbed at a Walmart in Traverse City, with a suspect now in custody.

Munson Healthcare confirmed via social media that all 11 victims are being treated at the hospital in north Michigan, although no information on their conditions was released. Updates will be provided "as appropriate," said spokesperson Megan Brown.

The Michigan State Police are collaborating with the local sheriff's office to investigate the incident, with details remaining limited. Authorities have urged the public to avoid the area as the investigation continues. First responders, including multiple police vehicles and a fire truck, were present at the scene following the event.

Walmart spokesperson Joe Pennington confirmed that the company is cooperating with the police and is deferring questions to them for the time being. *—PTI*

'Jeju Air pilots shut wrong engine'

SEOUL, 27 JULY

South Korean investigators has stated that the Jeju Air Boeing 737-800, which crashed in December during an emergency landing after a bird strike, may have been able to continue flying on its functioning left engine.

According to the investigators, preliminary findings reveal that the left engine sustained less damage compared to the right, yet the pilot is believed to have shut it 19 seconds post-strike. While the right engine experienced a surge and emitted flames and smoke, investigators confirmed it was still generating enough thrust for flight. The cockpit voice recorder reportedly holds evidence indicating the less-damaged engine was switched off. *—Agencies*

Investigators confirmed that while the right engine experienced a surge and emitted flames and smoke, the left one was generating enough thrust for flight when it was shut down **PHOTO: X**

RAGING RAINS: GLACIAL FLOOD WARNING IN PAKISTAN

ISLAMABAD, 27 JULY

Pakistan has issued a glacial flood warning for its northwestern regions as the country faces above-average monsoon rainfall, raising fears of disasters similar to the catastrophic 2022 floods, Al Jazeera reported on Saturday.

Al Jazeera said citing Anwar Shahzad, a spokesperson for Pakistan's Provincial Disaster Management Authority, that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan is experiencing

significantly heavier rains compared to the same time last year, prompting authorities to issue weather alerts for possible glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs).

Earlier this month, officials in an advisory warned that persistently high temperatures could accelerate the melting of snow and glaciers, potentially leading to weather-related disasters in vulnerable areas and highlighting the ongoing effects of climate change in Pakistan.

Spokesperson Faizullah Firaq of the Pakistan-occupied Gilgit-Baltistan (PoGB) government reported widespread destruction in certain areas, including damage to homes, infrastructure, agricultural land, and businesses. *—ANI*

HACKED WITH A MACHETE

Indian-origin man assaulted in Melbourne

MELBOURNE, 27 JULY

A 33-year-old Indian-origin man was brutally attacked with a machete by a group of teenagers in Melbourne's Altona Meadows.

The victim, Saurabh Anand, was ambushed by five teenagers around 7.30pm on 19 July, while he was walking home from a pharmacy.

Anand said that he was on a phone call when he noticed a flicker of movement beside him. "I didn't hear a sound," he said.

One of the boys began searching his pockets, another started punching him in the head until he collapsed. A third attacker pulled out a machete and held it to his throat.

"My instinctive reaction was to bring my arm up to protect my face and wrist. While I was trying to protect myself, the machete just went through my wrist. The second attack went through my hand. The third went through the bone," he said.

Saurabh Anand suffered stab wounds on his shoulder and back, a fractured spine and multiple broken bones in his arm **PHOTO: X**

"All I remember is the pain and my hand was ... hanging by a thread, " he added.

Anand suffered serious injuries, including a fractured spine, deep wounds on his shoulder and back, broken bones in his arm, and head trauma.

"I was just trying to survive," he said.

He managed to stumble outside the shopping centre and shout for help. Bystanders came to his aid and called emergency services.

He was rushed to the Royal Melbourne Hospital. Doctors initially feared they would have to amputate his left hand. However, after hours of emergency surgery, they were able to reattach it to his wrist by inserting screws.

Police have taken four of the five teenagers, aged 14 and 15, into custody. However, Anand was distressed that two of the accused had been released on bail. "I'm seeking justice... I want this to be a catalyst for change," he said.

This comes after a 23-year-old Indian man was reportedly attacked and left unconscious after a racist assault linked to a car parking dispute in Adelaide. He suffered brain trauma and multiple facial fractures. Similarly, the Shree Swaminarayan Temple in Boronia, a suburb of Melbourne, was vandalised with racial slurs. *—ANI*

Passengers rushed out of the plane through emergency slides and ran to safety **PHOTO: X**

TYRE ON FIRE: BOEING JET ABORTS TAKE-OFF

DENVER, 27 JULY

A major emergency unfolded at Denver International Airport on Saturday, as passengers on board an American Airlines (AA) flight were forced to evacuate moments before takeoff after a landing gear malfunction led to a fire.

The incident happened on American Airlines Flight 3023, a Boeing 737 Max 8 jet, which was scheduled to fly from Denver to Miami. Passengers could be seen rushing out of the plane through emergency slides and running to safety, while smoke and fire could be seen under the aircraft.

The Denver Fire Department said it responded to the incident and managed to extinguish the fire.

"All 173 passengers and six crew members on board the Boeing 737 Max 8 were safely removed from the aircraft," Fox News reported. One person was taken to a medical facility for a minor injury, it said.

The American Airlines said, "All customers and crew members deplaned safely, and the aircraft was taken out of service for inspection by our maintenance team." *—ANI*

PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

VinFast opens India's 1st showroom in Surat

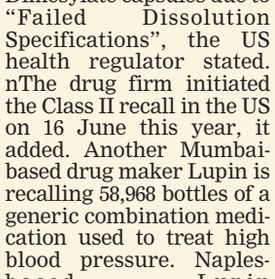
SURAT, 27 JULY

Vietnamese electric vehicle maker VinFast inaugurated its first showroom in India, in Surat, Gujarat ahead of its plant inauguration. This inauguration marks a significant milestone in the company's retail journey in the country. The outlet serves as the brand's physical touchpoint in India, underscoring VinFast's long-term commitment to establishing a strong, customer-centric electric mobility ecosystem. The dealership, 'VinFast Surat,' is promoted by Chandan Car, a leading name in India's automotive retail sector. VinFast Auto India, the Indian subsidiary, made this announcement in a statement on Sunday. Located in Piplod Surat's, the dealership will serve as a one-stop destination for VinFast's prospective buyers. Spread out on 3,000 Sq.Ft. the facility will offer product experiences, vehicle purchase journeys, and after-sales support. *—ANI*

Educated maids in high demand as families seek skills

MUMBAI, 27 JULY

Demand for educated house help or maids has surged manifold, driven by a growing number of dual-income households and their increasing reliance on outsourced support for daily chores, a report has said. Roles for maids with different education levels have witnessed a sharp growth in 2024 calendar year compared to the preceding year, leading to a steep rise in demand for such domestic helps, said the report by blue and grey collar recruitment platform WorkIndia. The demand for those who completed graduation rose by 102 per cent while demand for candidates who passed Class 10 and 12 successfully increased by 94 and a whopping 255 per cent respectively. This also creates an opportunity to upskill domestic workers, as the demand for professionally trained and educated maids continues to grow. *—ANI*



Sun, Lupin, Dr Reddy's recall products in US

NEW DELHI, 27 JULY

Domestic drug majors Sun Pharma, Lupin and Dr Reddy's Laboratories are recalling drugs in the US market due to manufacturing issues and product mix up, according to the US health regulator.

The latest Enforcement Report of US Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) said the Mumbai-headquartered Sun Pharmaceutical Industries is recalling 5,448 bottles of a generic medication in the US. Princeton-based Sun Pharmaceutical Industries Inc is recalling the affected lot of Lisdexamfetamine Dimesylate capsules due to "Failed Dissolution Specifications", the US health regulator stated. nThe drug firm initiated the Class II recall in the US on 16 June this year, it added. Another Mumbai-based drug maker Lupin is recalling 58,968 bottles of a generic combination medication used to treat high blood pressure. Naples-based Lupin Pharmaceuticals Inc is recalling Lisinopril and Hydrochlorothiazide tablets (USP 20mg/12.5mg). The affected lot was manufactured at the company's Nagpur-based manufacturing facility. As per the USFDA, the company initiated the Class II recall on 20 June due to "Product Mix Up". *—PTI*

6 of top-10 firms lose Rs 2.2L cr in mkt

Reliance Industries' valuation declined the most, down by over Rs 1.14 lakh crore

NEW DELHI, 27 JULY

The combined market capitalisation of six of India's top-10 most valued companies declined by Rs 2.22 lakh crore last week, with Reliance Industries taking the biggest hit amid a bearish trend in the equity market.

The BSE benchmark Sensex fell by 294.64 points, or 0.36 per cent, during the week. This marked the fourth consecutive weekly loss, driven by mixed earnings cues and heightened volatility.

"Markets ended lower for the fourth straight week as caution prevailed amid mixed cues. Positive earnings from HDFC Bank and ICICI Bank lent some support to the banking sector, but weakness in stocks like Reliance capped the recovery. Foreign fund outflows and uncertainty around trade deals ahead of the August 1 deadline also contributed to volatility," said Ajit Mishra, SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd.

PHOTO: PIXABAY

Reliance Industries' market valuation declined the most, down by Rs 1,14,687.7 crore to Rs 18,83,855.52 crore. Infosys lost Rs 29,474.56 crore, taking its mcap to Rs 6,29,621.56 crore, while LIC shed Rs 23,086.24 crore, slipping to Rs 5,60,742.67 crore.

TCS's valuation fell by Rs 20,080.39 crore to Rs 11,34,035.26 crore. Bajaj Finance and Hindustan Unilever lost Rs 17,524.3 crore and Rs 17,339.98 crore, respectively.

Meanwhile, four firms saw gains. HDFC Bank's valuation rose by Rs 37,161.53 crore to Rs 15,38,078.95 crore. ICICI Bank added Rs 35,814.41 crore, Bharti Airtel rose by Rs 20,841.2 crore, and State Bank of India gained Rs 9,685.34 crore.

- Meanwhile, four firms saw gains. HDFC Bank's valuation rose by Rs 37,161.53 crore to Rs 15,38,078.95 crore. ICICI Bank added Rs 35,814.41 crore, Bharti Airtel rose by Rs 20,841.2 crore, and State Bank of India gained Rs 9,685.34 crore.

Reliance remained India's most valued company, followed by HDFC Bank, TCS, Bharti Airtel, ICICI Bank, SBI, Infosys, Bajaj Finance, Hindustan Unilever and LIC. *—PTI*

MARKETS EYE Q1 EARNINGS, US FED DECISION AMID VOLATILITY

NEW DELHI, 27 JULY

Equity markets are poised for a volatile week, driven by key Q1 earnings, the US Federal Reserve's interest rate decision, and foreign investor activity, analysts said. Macroeconomic data, monthly auto sales figures, and global cues will also shape market sentiment.

Investors will closely track developments around the August 1 deadline, which marks the end of the suspension period of Trump-era tariffs on countries including India. Geopolitical tensions between Thailand and Cambodia could add to uncertainty.

"The start of August brings key economic data, including Industrial Production (IIP) and HSBC Manufacturing PMI, as well as July derivatives expiry — all potential sources of volatility," said Ajit Mishra, SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd. Results from major firms such as IndusInd Bank, Asian Paints, Tata Steel, Hindustan Unilever, Mahindra & Mahindra, Maruti Suzuki, Sun Pharma, and ITC will be crucial in assessing corporate performance. Globally, focus will remain on the US Fed's policy stance and GDP figures, with updates on trade negotiations. *—PTI*

India offers duty relief on UK pastries, pet food

NEW DELHI, 27 JULY

PHOTO: FREEPIK

India has granted significant tariff concessions to the UK under the newly signed Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), covering goods such as pastries, pet food, cosmetics, air conditioners, and washing machines, while excluding sensitive sectors like tea, coffee, and gold.

The agreement, signed on July 24, will come into effect within a year, pending UK Parliament approval. India will phase out tariffs on 90% of UK-origin goods, with timelines ranging from immediate to 10 years. Items like microwave ovens, shaving creams, and detergents will become duty-free upon implementation, while chocolates, cakes, protein concentrates, and pet food will see phased reductions. Duties on soaps and cosmetics will also be gradually removed.

Alcoholic beverages priced above USD 6 per 750ml will see tariffs fall from 110% to 40% over 10 years. Meanwhile, scrap metals and turbo-jets will benefit from phased concessions, though aluminium scrap remains excluded.

India's chemical sector, a major beneficiary, will enjoy zero-duty access for over 1,000 product categories. CHEMEXCIL expects a 30–40% surge in exports to the UK, potentially reaching USD 750 million by 2025–26.

To maximise the pact's benefits, the government will hold 1,000 outreach events across India over 20 days. Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal will engage with sectors like leather and textiles to explain the agreement's implications.

The pact grants India duty-free access for exports including textiles, marine products, agro-goods, and processed foods, while securing favourable terms for financial and digital services. Indian IT firms in the UK will also be exempt from social security payments for three years. Tariffs on British cars and whisky will be cut, under quota and pricing conditions. *—PTI*

'NO CHALLENGES IN GROWTH'

Economy will grow 6.5% in FY26: RBI

NEW DELHI, 27 JULY

The Indian economy is growing at a robust pace and will not face any challenge in achieving a growth rate upwards of 6.5 per cent in the current financial year, RBI Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) member Nagesh Kumar said on Sunday.

Kumar said the Indian economy, among all economies, continues to remain a bright spot for the world. "More than a third of global economies are under the debt crisis...The industrialised economies are facing a lot of pressure and high inflation and the slowdown of economic growth," he said.

But because Indian economy is more driven by domestic consumption and domestic investment, less by export or trade, India continues to grow very robustly, Kumar said.

"I do not see any challenges in Indian economy achieving upwards of 6.5 per cent growth in the current year and the next. And hopefully, this kind of growth momentum will continue for coming years, but also be over time strengthened to 7–7.5 per cent," he said.

- Kumar said Indian economy to remain a bright spot for the world.

The Indian economy is estimated to have grown at 6.5 per cent last financial year.

As per the Reserve Bank of India's projections, the country's economy will expand at the same rate in the current fiscal year as well.

Responding to a question on inflation, Kumar said current rate of CPI inflation is around 2 per cent and this is largely a result of the policy adopted by the MPC (monetary policy committee) or RBI, and now it has come down to within the target range. *—PTI*

14 IPOs including NSDL, 10 SMEs opening next week

NEW DELHI, 27 JULY

The Indian IPO market is set for a significant week starting Monday, with 14 new initial public offerings (IPOs) across the mainboard and SME segments. These IPOs, combined on the mainboard and SME, aim to rise over Rs 7,000 crore collectively.

Among the mainboard IPOs, subscription for National Securities Depository Ltd's shares will start on Wednesday with an issue size of Rs 4,012 crore (entirely an offer for sale); the price band is Rs 760-800 per share. NSDL, India's largest depository, is expected to attract strong institutional demand due to its role in the growth of Indian capital markets, analysts said. Among other mainboard issues are those of Aditya Infotech (opening on Tuesday) with an issue size of Rs 1,300 crore and a price band of Rs 640-675 per share. It is an IT services firm focusing on cloud, automation, and AI segments. Laxmi India Finance is opening for subscription on Tuesday with an issue size of Rs 254 crore, priced at Rs 150-158 per share. *—PTI*

Tata gets Rs 7,800 cr notice over AGR dues

NEW DELHI, 27 JULY

PHOTO: ANI

The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has issued a show-cause-cum-demand notice of Rs 7,827.55 crore to Tata Communications over adjusted gross revenue (AGR) dues spanning from FY 2005-06 to FY 2023-24.

According to an official note dated 17 July, the demand includes Rs 276.68 crore towards disallowance of deductions claimed on a payment basis for FY 2010-11 under the ISP licence, and for FY 2006-07 and 2009-10 under the NLD (National Long Distance) licence.

Managing Director AS Lakshminarayan stated the demand has evolved over time, and Tata Communications has existing appeals related to its ILD (International Long Distance), NLD, and ISP licences pending before the Supreme Court and the Telecom Disputes Settlement and Appellate Tribunal (TDSAT).

Lakshminarayan added that the company's licences are distinct from those under the older UASL regime, which was the subject of the Supreme Court's October 2019 verdict on AGR dues. Based on legal advice and internal assessment, Tata Communications remains confident of defending its case.

Previously, the government calculated total AGR dues across telcos at Rs 1.65 lakh crore, with Airtel owing Rs 31,280 crore, Vodafone Idea Rs 59,236.63 crore, Reliance Jio Rs 631 crore, BSNL Rs 16,224 crore, and MTNL Rs 5,009.1 crore. *—PTI*

Forex drops for 3rd week, down $1.18B

MUMBAI, 27 JULY

PHOTO: AI

India's foreign exchange reserves fell by USD 1.18 billion to USD 695.49 billion for the week ending July 18, marking the third straight week of decline, according to the official data released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

In the previous reporting week, the country's foreign exchange reserves fell by USD 3.06 billion to USD 696.67 billion.

In the week ending July 18, foreign currency assets, the major constituent of the forex reserves, fell by USD 1.201 billion to USD 587.609 billion, possibly becoming the primary reason for the decline in the forex reserves.

The Gold reserves, another major component of the forex, again witnessed an impressive recovery from last week's decline, increasing by USD 150 million to USD 84.499 billion, following the previous week's fall of USD 498 million.

India's Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) with the global financial body, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), witnessed another dip of USD 119 million, reaching USD 18.683 billion.

Central banks worldwide are increasingly accumulating safe-haven gold in their foreign exchange reserves kitty, and India is no exception. The share of gold maintained by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in its foreign exchange reserves has almost doubled since 2021, till recently.

In 2023, India added around USD 58 billion to its foreign exchange reserves, contrasting with a cumulative decline of USD 71 billion in 2022. In 2024, the reserves rose by a little over USD 20 billion, touching an all-time high of USD 704.885 billion at the end of September 2024.

India's foreign exchange reserves (Forex) are sufficient to meet 11 months of the country's imports and about 96 per cent of external debt, said Governor Sanjay Malhotra while announcing the outcome of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) decisions.

- In 2023, India added around USD 58 billion to its foreign exchange reserves, contrasting with a cumulative decline of USD 71 billion in 2022. In 2024, the reserves rose by a little over USD 20 billion.

Foreign exchange reserves, or FX reserves, are assets held by a nation's central bank or monetary authority, primarily in reserve currencies such as the US Dollar, with smaller portions in the Euro, Japanese Yen, and Pound Sterling.

The RBI often intervenes by managing liquidity, including selling dollars, to prevent steep Rupee depreciation. The RBI strategically buys dollars when the Rupee is strong and sells when it weakens. *—ANI*

CONFESS WITH CAUTION

ChatGPT therapy chats are not pvt: Altman

NEW DELHI, 27 JULY

As more and more people start looking to AI chatbots like ChatGPT for emotional support, OpenAI CEO Sam Altman recently acknowledged that the tech industry still hasn't resolved how to safeguard user data during sensitive AI interactions.

Appearing on the YouTube podcast This Past Weekend with Theo Von, Altman was responding to a question about AI's role within the legal system. He explained that, in the absence of clear legal or policy frameworks for AI, users shouldn't expect conversations with ChatGPT to be legally confidential.

"People share some of the most personal things in their lives with ChatGPT," Altman said. He also referred to instances when young people turn to ChatGPT like features as if they are therapists or life coaches.

- While applications like WhatsApp and Signal are encrypted end-to-end, preventing third parties from accessing one's conversation, OpenAI employees can access chats with ChatGPT either to improve the AI or detect misuse.

However, he pointed to the one key factor that distinguishes between both: "Unlike therapists, doctors, or lawyers—who are bound by legal confidentiality—there's no such protection in place yet for conversations with ChatGPT."

Altman also urged that the concept of confidentiality and privacy for conversations with AI should be addressed urgently, he added.

While applications like WhatsApp and Signal are encrypted end-to-end, preventing third parties from accessing one's conversation, OpenAI employees can access chats with ChatGPT either to improve the AI or detect misuse. Amid increasing concerns about privacy, OpenAI is currently in the middle of a lawsuit with The New York Times.

While OpenAI claims to delete free-tier ChatGPT conversations within 30 days, but reports suggest that it may retain them for a longer period for legal or security reasons. *—Agencies*

Karisma seeks share in Sunjay's ₹30K crore estate

MUMBAI, 27 JULY

In the wake of businessman Sunjay Kapur's sudden death on 12 June, a high-stakes property dispute has emerged involving his Rs 30,000 crore estate. Actor Karisma Kapoor, Sunjay's ex-wife, is reportedly seeking a share in his assets.

While no official statement has been released by Karisma or her representatives, the development adds a dramatic twist to the ongoing family conflict.

Sunjay's mother, Rani Kapur, has claimed she holds the majority stake in the Sona Group and is the rightful heir to the business empire. She alleged that attempts are being made by unnamed individuals to seize control of the family legacy. Rani also stated she has not authorised anyone to represent the group.

In a legal statement via senior advocate Vaibhav Gaggar, Rani questioned the circumstances of Sunjay's death, which was initially reported as cardiac arrest. She described it as suspicious and expressed distress over being coerced into signing documents shortly after his passing.

Rani has urged the cancellation of the Sona Group's Annual General Meeting, scheduled for today, and warned against the appointment of new directors. While no formal legal proceedings have begun, she reserves the right to challenge all recent developments. *—Agencies*

PHOTO: PTI

Scottish Open: Diksha moves to 48th on day 3

NORTH AYRSHIRE, 22 JULY

Indian golfer Diksha Dagar improved slightly in the third round of the 2025 ISPS HANDA Women's Scottish Open as she moved up 11 spots to tied-48th on day 3 at the Dundonald Links here. The 24-year-old winner of two Ladies European Tour titles, who was tied-59th on day 2, had two birdies and a bogey, all in the first six holes. Diksha birdied the third and the sixth holes and dropped her only shot on the fifth. She parred her last 12 holes as she compiled 1-under 71 on a day when the weather was good and there was no breeze. She had shot 69 and 76 in the first two rounds. The other two Indians, Pranavi Urs and Tvesa Malik, had earlier missed the cut. England's Lottie Woad fired a round of 67 (-5) to take a two-shot lead into the last day. The English star got off to a steady start before rolling in her first birdie of the day on the fifth. *—PTI*

Gill 3rd Indian batter to score 700 runs

Ravindra Jadeja and Washington Sundar carry on a good fight as India takes lead

NEW DELHI, 31 OCT

Shubman Gill on Sunday became only the third Indian batter after Sunil Gavaskar and Yashasvi Jaiswal to score 700 runs or more in a Test series.

Shubman Gill completed a gutsy hundred after Ben Stokes battled through pain to dismiss a well-set KL Rahul, leaving India at 223 for four on day five of the fourth Test against England here on Sunday.

Resuming the day at 174 for two with a deficit of 137, India remained on course to draw the game courtesy a fighting effort from Gill, who brought up his fourth century of the series.

KL Rahul

The Indian captain fell at the stroke of lunch as the visitors still trail England by 88 runs.Considering India's backs against the wall and series on the line, this could be Gill's most defining century if India managed to save the match and keep the series alive.

It would still be a tough ask with Rishabh Pant injured and not much batting to follow.

Like at Lord's, he did not care much about his injury-prone body to help the team's cause.The new ball was taken after the 80th over and resulted in the wicket of Gill. Jadeja too would have been gone first ball, but Joe Root could not hold on to a tough chance at first slip off Archer.

India's captain Shubman Gill celebrates his century during the fifth day *PHOTO: PTI*

Jadeja, Sundar Slam 50s

Ravindra Jadeja and Washington Sundar struck unbeaten half-centuries to guide India to 322 for four at tea on the fifth and final day of the fourth Test against England here on Sunday.

Jadeja and Washington were batting on 53 and 57 respectively at the break, having added 100 runs for the fifth wicket as the visitors wiped off England's massive 311-run deficit. *—PTI*

India's batters Ravindra Jadeja and Washington Sundar run between wickets during the fifth day of the fourth Test match *PHOTO: PTI*

Ankita bags women's 3000m steeplechase silver

RHINE-RUHR, 27 JULY

Steeplechaser Ankita came up with a blistering run to clinch silver in the gruelling 3000m event with a personal-best time of 9:31.99 seconds, as India made a promising start on the final day of the World University Games here on Sunday. On a day when several Indian athletes are in contention in track events, 23-year-old Ankita, a second-year social sciences student, shaved nearly seven seconds from her personal best time of 9:39.00 seconds to finish a few milliseconds behind Finland's Ilona Maaria Mononen, who timed 9:31.86. Adia Budde of Germany took the bronze, clocking 9:33.34 seconds. *—PTI*

Bhatia shoots 63 to move into lead at 3M Open

BLAINE, 27 JULY

Akshay Bhatia chipped in twice on the way to a career-equalling 8-under 63 on the moving day to take a share of the lead at the 3M Open on the PGA Tour here. He shared the lead with Denmark's Thorbjorn, who aced the par-3 eighth and shot a 4-under 67 at the TPC Twin Cities. Bhatia, a 23-year-old Indian-American, is seeking his third PGA TOUR victory in his 90th start, with his previous wins being the 2023 Barracuda Championship and the 2024 Valero Texas Open. His third round 8-under 63 matched his career-low score, which he has shot five times. The last time Bhatia played the 3M Open, he was T-64 in 2024.*—PTI*

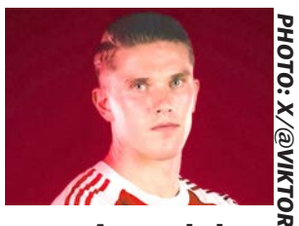


PHOTO: X/@VIKTOR

Arsenal signs Viktor from Sporting Lisbon

LONDON, 27 JULY

Arsenal signed Sweden forward Viktor Gyokeres, bringing an end to the Premier League club's years-long search for a prolific goal-scorer. Gyokeres completed a move from Sporting Lisbon worth a reported 63 million pounds ($85 million) and signed a five-year contract. "Viktor is an exceptional talent and has consistently demonstrated he has the qualities and winning mentality required of a top-level centre-forward. His physicality, intelligence, and work ethic make him a perfect fit for our vision," said Arsenal sporting director Andrea Berta.*—PTI*

Marcus Rashford makes first Barcelona appearance in friendly win

LONDON, 27 JULY

New signing Roony Bardghji and youngster Pedro Fernández scored late goals as Barcelona beat Vissel Kobe 3-1 on Sunday.

Marcus Rashford also played his first minutes as a Barça player in the friendly in Japan, but it was Bardghji, who joined from FC Copenhagen this summer, and academy graduate Fernández who swung the game in the Spanish champions' favour in the final 15 minutes.

Bardghji capped his debut with a fine strike from just inside the penalty box before Fernández hammered in an equally impressive goal to seal the win.

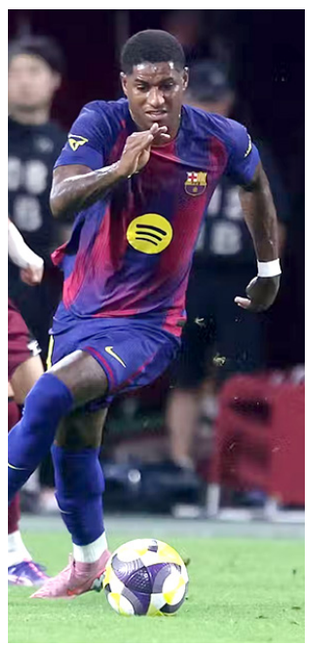
Vissel Kobe forward Taisei Miyashiro had earlier cancelled out Eric García's opener to leave the score level at the break.

With no international tournament and Barça not involved in the Club World Cup this summer, coach Hansi Flick has the luxury of a fully fit and available squad for the club's preseason tour of Asia.

That was reflected in the strength of the two different sides he was able to field, with Barça making 11 changes at the break to give everyone minutes.

Raphinha headed Barça's best early chance straight at goalkeeper Daiya Maekawa, but the Blaugrana led soon after when right-back García turned home from close range.

Kobe levelled just before half-time. Goalkeeper Joan García, another player making their Barça debut after joining from rivals Espanyol, saved from Daiju Sasaki, but Miyashiro scored the rebound. *—PTI*



Tilak Varma to lead South Zone in Duleep Trophy

BENGALURU, 27 JULY

India batter N Tilak Varma was on Sunday named as the South Zone skipper in the season-opening Duleep Trophy to be held here next month.

The 22-year-old Tilak, who has played four ODIs and 25 T20Is, was in fine touch for Hampshire recently, smashing 100, 56, 47, and 112 in four innings for the English county side.Kerala players were rewarded for their excellent run till the Ranji Trophy final as four players from the state found a place in the 16-member squad.

They were: Mohammed Azharuddeen, who will be Tilak's deputy, MD Nidheesh, Basil NP, and Salman .Tamil Nadu batter Narayan Jagadeesan, who has flown to England as a cover for the injured Rishabh Pant, senior left-arm spinner R SaiKishore and middle-order batter Devdutt Padikkal are in the squad. *—PTI*

N Tilak Varma

T20I SERIES

Green, Josh Inglis help Australia take a 4-0 lead

BASSETERRE, 27 JULY

Half-centuries to Cameron Green and Josh Inglis led Australia to a three-wicket win over West Indies and extended its lead to 4-0 in a five-match Twenty20 international series on Sunday.

Australia chased down the West Indies' score of 205-9 in the final over without too much trouble, with Green top scoring with an unbeaten 55, his third fifty of the series, while Inglis set the tone early with a spritely 51. It's the seventh time West Indies have failed to defend a score over 200 in Twenty20 internationals, the most of any ICC member nation. Sherfane Rutherford made 31 off 15 balls to top score for the hosts, who also had handy contributions from the middle order, Rovman Powell (28), Romario Shepherd (28), and Jason Holder (26) after being asked again to bat first at Warner Park. Shai Hope, who made a brilliant unbeaten 102 on Friday to become the second male West Indian player after Chris Gayle to score a century in each format, could only manage 10 this game before chipping a catch to a diving Glenn Maxwell off Xavier Bartlett. Aaron Hardie, playing this game for the rested Tim David, was the pick of Australia's bowlers with an economical 2-24 off four overs, including Roston Chase for a first-ball duck and later Powell to interrupt the hosts' progress.Australia's reply started shakily with captain Mitch Marsh out in the first over for Jediah Blades' first T20 international wicket.

Australia 206 for 7 (Green 55*, Inglis 51, Blades 3-29) beat West Indies 205 for 9 (Rutherford 31, Zampa 3-54, Hardie 2-24) by three wickets. *—PTI*

DC OPEN

Davidovich Fokina beats Shelton to reach final vs de Minaur

WASHINGTON, 27 JULY

Alejandro Davidovich Fokina broke big-serving Ben Shelton a half-dozen times and eliminated the No. 4 seed by a 6-2, 7-5 score in the D.C. Open semifinals to follow up his upset of No. 1 seed Taylor Fritz a night earlier.

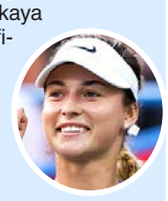
The 12th-seeded Davidovich Fokina, a 26-year-old from Spain, will face No. 7 seed Alex de Minaur on Sunday for the title at the hard-court tournament. De Minaur advanced to his second Washington final by beating Corentin Moutet 6-4, 6-3.Davidovich Fokina will be seeking his first ATP trophy in his fourth career final. No matter the outcome, he has guaranteed himself a debut in the top 20 of the rankings after arriving in D.C. at No. 26.

The semifinal win was de Minaur's 20th victory on a hard court in 2025, the most on the ATP tour. The Australian, who is 13th in the rankings, moved into his 19th career final; he's 9-9 so far. One of the runner-up finishes came against Alexander Zverev at Washington in 2018.

In the women's bracket, Leylah Fernandez will be trying to win her first WTA title of the season, and Anna Kalinskaya will seek the first of her career when they meet each other on Sunday. *—PTI*

Alejandro Davidovich

Raducanu has been beaten by Anna



BRITAIN'S Emma Raducanu has been beaten 6-4, 6-3 by Russia's Anna Kalinskaya in the semi-finals of the Washington Open. The 22-year-old, whose run in the United States has ensured she will regain her British number one spot from Katie Boulter, served five aces early on, but could not convert any of her four break point opportunities.

Lewis Hamilton to start from pit lane

PARIS, 27 JULY

Lewis Hamilton will start Sunday's Belgian Grand Prix from the pit lane with a new power unit after qualifying only 16th, Ferrari said.

The seven-time Formula One world champion won at Spa with Mercedes last year but has had a nightmare so far, qualifying 18th in Friday's sprint qualifying and finishing 15th in Saturday's 100km race.

Hamilton has won five times in Belgium and has been on the podium in all but two of the races he has finished at the longest circuit on the calendar.

The Briton, who moved to the Italian team in January and has yet to stand on the podium for it, apologised to Ferrari on Saturday for a performance he said was unacceptable.

Aston Martin's Fernando Alonso and Mercedes' Kimi Antonelli will also start from the pit lane after those teams also changed engine components.

Sunday's race is set to be wet. The Formula Two feature race started behind the safety car, while the Formula Three race was cancelled entirely due to the conditions. *—PTI*

SWIMMING WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

12-year-old Chinese swimmer Yu Zidi makes her debut on world stage

SINGAPORE, 27 JULY

The globe got its first look on Sunday at 12-year-old Chinese prodigy swimmer Yu Zidi, making her debut at the swimming world championships.

She did not disappoint on the opening day of the eight-day competition in the pool in Singapore.

Yu, who has been swimming astounding times in China, clocked 2 minutes, 11.90 seconds in the 200-meter individual medley to advance to the semifinals. Her time was the 15th fastest of the 16 qualifiers.

Her time was a bit off her season-best time of 2:10.63.

Yu will swim three events in Singapore, including the 400 IM and the 200 butterfly. The 200 IM is probably her weakest event.

Her times in the butterfly and 200 IM in the recent Chinese championships are among the best in the world this season. Her best times in those two events would have been good for fourth place last year in the Paris Olympics.

American team battles a case of acute gastroenteritis

The United States team at the swimming world championships in Singapore is battling a case of "acute gastroenteritis" that compromised performances on Sunday, the opening day of eight days of competition in the pool.

Nikki Warner, the spokeswoman for USA Swimming, confirmed the outbreak to The Associated Press and said it had its roots at a training camp the American team held in Phuket, Thailand, before arriving in Singapore.

She said all American swimmers had traveled to Singapore. She declined to say how many had been affected by the infectious diarrhea.

Summer McIntosh starts her quest for five gold medals

Summer McIntosh of Canada began her quest for five gold medals in the swimming world championships on Sunday's opening day in Singapore. McIntosh, who won three gold medals a year ago at the Paris Olympics, holds the world record in the 400 free 3 minutes, 54.18 seconds and is the favorite in the race Sunday alongside American Katie Ledecky.

Ledecky has the year's second-best time of 3:56.81. She will face McIntosh again in the 800 free later in the meet.

Though she holds the 400 freestyle world record, McIntosh has failed to win gold in the event in the Olympics or previous world championships. *—PTI*

Summer Mcintosh of Canada